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Editorial

THIS second number of the *BRITISH ANNUAL OF LITERATURE* goes to press at a grave moment. The fears and doubts of the summer of 1939 have culminated in the long-dreaded event which might seem calculated to kill, for the moment at least, creative effort in literature. But even if the first natural reaction may have been one of discouragement, a stronger one must supervene, of faith in the task to which we have set our hand, and belief in the mission of the *ANNUAL*, adding its mite to the vast contribution of national and imperial solidarity now being brought to the settlement of world problems.

The small output of creative literature during the past year is a sign of the troubled times. It is an indisputable fact that both amongst published books and on the stage the most noteworthy works in English produced in 1939 have been by American authors. This dearth is bound to be followed by a rich productiveness; in the meantime, publishers have made up their lists with books of the informative kind, and it is gratifying to note how many such books recently published find their subject-matter in the overseas Dominions—a circumstance which will become apparent on a glance at our review columns, through the medium of which we have also been able to call attention to the notable increase in publishing activity overseas. We hope greatly to expand the reviewing department of the *ANNUAL*, and invite publishers in the Dominions, in particular, to send us review copies of books that would be interesting for our purpose.

Following the broad lines of editorial policy already laid down, the present volume seeks to give recognition to the manifold culture that is being developed through the medium of the English language under the

* War-time address : London Printing Works, Guildford, Surrey.

British flag. One of our contributors compares Britain's civilising function to that of Rome, and his words are more than an empty phrase. A survey of literature written in English at the present point of time reveals not merely the periodical flowering of an old and stately tree, but the shooting of saplings destined in time to rival it in size and importance. The literatures of the English-speaking Dominions are already flourishing plants. In this ANNUAL, Professor V. N. Bhushan describes the wealth of writing that is being produced in the English tongue by British subjects of Indian race. In Professor van den Heever's interesting article on contemporary Afrikaans literature we are shown the reverse side of the picture—the modifications the Dutch language has undergone in South Africa through the impact upon it of English. Again, the account given by Miss Marjorie Pearman of Professor Kirkconnell's translations of folk-songs will serve to bring home the diversity of the polyglot culture of the immigrants who are being gradually welded into a Canadian-British unity.

The Editor wishes to express warmest thanks to the helpers who have made the success of the ANNUAL possible: to contributors and editorial staff for their loyal services rendered to the first as well as the second volume; to the Press throughout the Empire for unexpectedly generous and appreciative reviews; to publishers who have sent us books for review and illustrations for reproduction; and to the book-selling trade for friendly assistance given in the up-hill task of establishing a new periodical. We earnestly request a continuance of that sympathetic co-operation which alone, in the difficult times lying before us, can ensure the survival of our work.

The Outlook for Creative Literature in a Politics-Ridden World

BY FRANK SWINNERTON

WHEN very young and quick-witted children have passed the stages of recognition and imitation, they begin to play. First at a form of hide-and-seek; then, with laughter, by little tricks with their toys; and at last, in spontaneous expression of a delight in life, by pretending. They invent reasons for all they see; they exuberantly tell themselves stories, imagine characters, and live half in and half out of a world of make-believe.

This is the beginning of what I call "creative literature," which is predominantly imaginative, and which has produced the folk tales, the fairy stories, the epics of Homer, the histories of Herodotus, the plays of Shakespeare, the poems of Coleridge and Keats, and the novels of Jane Austen, Balzac, Dickens, and Dostoevsky. This literature, whatever its incidental teachings, is not didactic in impulse. The force behind it is less evangelical than energetic. The writers are not pulpiteers, but songsters. They see and invent and tell, almost in fun, because seeing and inventing and telling are as natural and enjoyable and even as necessary to them as eating and drinking and laughing.

But creative writers are all exceptional writers; for the truth is that as soon as the liveliest children of the past could understand the meaning of words they heard the eternal "do" and "don't"; with "you must" and "you ought" and "you shall not." Their exuberance was shown to them as a devil's temptation; their inventions were "lies"; and facts, duties, and rules of conduct guarded every mental byroad. Just as they do now, the majority of children became conventional, by conforming either to the habits of the many or to the equally rigid habits of the fewer (who pride themselves upon the convention of unconventionality); because only the very strong-willed could and can long resist the social and intellectual influences by which we are all surrounded.

In one sense the children of past ages were more strictly controlled than the children of our day. They were supervised by their parents and their

schoolmasters. But in another sense they had more liberty; for their world was a small one with immeasurable horizons, and they could have peace whenever they desired it. Noise had not yet invaded life. The countryside was silent; the towns, though most of them were fast growing, and though their main streets were increasingly filled with traffic, rattled but did not shriek. China and Peru were names as romantic as Popocatepetl. Whether there was or was not a historical sea coast of Bohemia did not seem to be a matter of intrinsic importance. And loneliness, that state in which men and women learn most of all about the universe and the mysterious kingdom of the spirit, was pleasant and profitable. In such days one could dream and imagine, believe in one's genius, and write what it amused one to write without wondering—as youth with the hothouse reputations of today must wonder—what would be thought and said of it by one's close contemporaries.

I say "those days," knowing well how vague the term must be. But I cannot stay to define it more clearly. There were whole ages, of course, when books were not written at all, and later ages when, as there was no printing, only clerks could give permanence to their imaginings and hair-splittings over the creeds of mankind. But I am speaking of the world as it was before the most modern inventions produced that chaos in which we uncertainly stumble towards despair; a world before the War to End War led to the Peace to End Peace and before ideologies and Peace Ballots led to the invasions of China, and Abyssinia, and Czecho-Slovakia, and so to the War of Nerves from which a good part of the world is now suffering. The era "Before the War" is often regretfully spoken of, by the elderly, as a golden age. I think it was, for the creative writer, certainly an age of independence; and although it had its difficulties it had not lost touch with permanent values.

At that time the creative writer could be a politician. He could use the experience he had gained as magistrate or journalist or exile to reinforce his play or poem or imaginary tale with exposures of man's tyranny to man. But he was not first of all a journalist or a polemist. On the whole he began his work with the happy conviction that his fellow-creatures were brothers and sisters; and he was able to treat them as good and bad, sometimes as very very good and highly detestable (as Balzac did with Cousin Pons and La Cibot), and sometimes in the spirit of Tchechov's schoolmaster-friend, who remarked, "The fact is, scoundrels too are unhappy—the devil take them," without losing sight of their importance as individuals. And upon the basis of his belief that man was a man, and therefore quite unlike any other man, he built his work. Those were the days when Free Will was a generally accepted doctrine.

"The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars,
But in ourselves, that we are underlings."

From the Reformation onward, it had been more and more firmly believed that a man might have privacy for his own thoughts; but that as a necessary corollary he must accept responsibility for his own actions. The belief was peculiarly favourable to creative writing.

However, whether or not the Puritan strain in mankind—which is by no means restricted to the English and Americans—was diverted from Calvinism to Rationalism by the Benthamites I cannot say; but the nineteenth century was already Determinist when Darwin started the collapse of the individual. It was in vain that Samuel Butler and Bernard Shaw, adapting Lamarck to later conditions, tried to save Free Will: "Science" had arrived. And "Science," which has now passed from Atheism to Agnosticism and a Mathematical God, was for a time wedded to such mechanistic pessimism that creative writing struggled almost in vain to keep its faith and its glowing enjoyment of life and humanity from total eclipse. Meredith, perhaps, was the last great comic novelist. Hardy, nobly saluting the Fates, took his place. Hardy in turn was succeeded by realism, naturalism, photography, slices of life, and whatever else can suggest a grey stew made of old horse and twice-cooked rice pudding. The creative microcosm of Balzac was given the colour and statistical accuracy of a blue book. The individual was lost in the type; and the type was lost in Society.

This was the case in the Drama of Ideas, which derived from Ibsen, and in the Sociological Novel. Both, being out-of-date, now survive only as historical examples. But both played their part in the exclusion of the individual from what had been creative literature. He remained alive in the work of Joseph Conrad; but Conrad went out of fashion as the new psychology came in. When, therefore, the individual was again heard of, he had ceased to be amusing. He had become either a pathological case or a stream of consciousness.

And the War had been fought and lost by humanity.

I do not pretend to know what were the origins of the War, and I cannot in any event discuss those origins here. But while much of the life we now know would have wearied us whether there had been a war or not there seems to me to be no doubt that from about the time of the War certain phenomena inimical to creative writing have either come into being or been greatly developed. The first of these is Noise. The second is Speed. The third is Publicity (sometimes called Propaganda). The fourth is Fear. We can no longer think quietly; we can no longer go slowly. The air is crowded with aeroplanes and the bellowing of futile voices; and men are so afraid and indignant and helpless that the majority is everywhere yielding to the influences of noise and speed and publicity and the ambitions of quacks who deliberately use and cultivate fear as a great stomach for their nostrums. Politics, before the War, may have been

shady; nowadays they are so hideous as to represent, for many people, either an obsession or a large-scale persecution. They are everywhere. Even in England, which has hitherto kept them on this side of hysteria, they are becoming so insistent that the young writers who should be leading the way to new grandeurs of the spirit have fallen to the level of sophistical pamphleteers. They cannot think, they cannot feel; they can only turn on the gramophone records of their party and with shallow sentimentality preach the class war and the gospel of universal slavery.

They do not think their gospel is one of slavery. They think it is the policy by which they will ascend to positions of authority in some totalitarian state and frame the laws for suffering masses of nonentities. Seeing themselves first of all in the rôles of revolutionary writers, they bray for a cause; they grow more and more bitter as their assault is seen to be ineffective; they do not realise that if once their plans for the beneficial enslavement of mankind were to be carried into effect a terrible change would fall upon them. As Macaulay once said:

"The doctrine which from the very first origin of religious dissensions has been held by all bigots of all sects, when condensed into a few words, and stripped of rhetorical disguise, is simply this: I am in the right, and you are in the wrong. When you are the stronger you ought to tolerate me; for it is your duty to tolerate truth. But when I am the stronger, I shall persecute you; for it is my duty to persecute error."

You will find in England innumerable demands for freedom of speech. You will not find any promise at all that in the event of a change in the form of our government a like freedom will be accorded to all. It is a significant fact.

But indeed the lot of a revolutionary writer after successful revolution is unfortunate. His occupation is gone. His words cannot, like the words of political speakers, sink into comfortable oblivion. On the contrary, they are there in print for every enemy to ransack and display. He must either continue to praise the new regime, as a sycophant, or he must turn counter-revolutionary. In that case, what happens to his former loyalties? While a man of small talent may cut a temporary figure in attack, it takes a man of larger size to defend or to rise above his old self into independence. Indignation serves no longer as a substitute for poetic fire; age creeps upon the revolutionary; he is soon forgotten.

He is forgotten because he cannot mature. He cannot tolerate. He is a bigot, pledged to support a party. Now the genuinely creative writer, being a single individual who is concerned with the pursuit of truth, or the living essence of man, cannot and should not bind himself to a party.

It is inevitable that he should remain, in a standardised and partisan world, true to himself. He cannot be an instrument, an employee; unless he has freedom, he has nothing to say. He will share the sterility of the regime. For it is precisely freedom that the politics-ridden State cannot allow him. Unless all men can be forced into uniformity of belief and expression of belief the State (as constituted) is endangered.

That is why, in a world in which Politics dominate the general thought, so little is being written which belongs to what I have called creative literature—the literature of all time. Topicality has its easy attractiveness to the eager, superficial mind; but it is comment, not creation. It is dead tomorrow. The creative has to do with the timeless attributes of man. It is as spontaneous as wit, and as deep as thought. Noise drowns it; propaganda crushes it; speed outruns it; fear, the panic which causes men to huddle into parties, is fatally its enemy. Unless, therefore, we can restore a stable society in which men may hold and express their opinions, hold and enjoy their own property, go confidently here and there upon the earth without thought of party orders or the day's threats of war, we must say farewell to the hope of a revived creative literature. We shall never again salute a Shakespeare or a Jane Austen. Reading will cease. For when all the politically subversive books have been burned and all the possibly subversive writers executed night will have settled for ever upon the human imagination.

The Pacifist

O H regiments in my blood, march swiftly past
The buried wrong, the old imprisonment,
Walking with wet eyes where the stone was cast,
Walking with bowed head where their bravery went.
Mine not to carve their courage one notch more,
To sound again their shadowy trumpet's boast.
I pass them by, the dead men and their war,
I tread in silence down their shadowy coast.

Through vein and nerve, in waking as in dream,
They cry me back, the men whose sharp lives broke
As shafts on targets; they who through a stream
Of alien weeping saw their cities' smoke.
I cross no forest and I climb no hill
But helmet voices hollow in the glen
Cry out for kin, their dusty loins to fill,
Seek for the hand their wrath to point again.

Crisp underfoot the leaves; the yellow water
Sodden with leaves and brittle-boned with ice
Sings yet again of legendry's lost daughter,
Her arms like white boughs bent from Paradise.
And all companionship and all rewards,
And all things lovely in her recent star
Let fall their snows on hands that supple are
By plight with falcon-jesses, wands and swords.

But I with peregrine upon my wrist,
(Her name is Truth; her hooded eyes see clear),
Must lose again their many-peopled mist,
Their rainbow bodies, bedded in the mere.
Must lead my lean horse, plod in beggar's smock,
Cringe from the stranger's spittle in the inn,
Until, alert and waiting in its rock,
The nearer blood of Abel names me kin.

ROBIN HYDE.

(With acknowledgements to *Verse Alive*.)

The Work of John Masefield

By EDITH M. FRY

WHEN the election of the present Laureate set the official seal on his reputation, appreciation and criticism became vocal together, but there was general agreement as to the significance for his race and generation of the candidate chosen. Since that time the tendency to assess him as the typical English poet has grown more marked, particularly in the judgment of foreign critics, who may be assumed to possess the impartiality and perspective sometimes lacking in those nearer at hand. Yet no writer can be less truly described as a narrow nationalist, and none has been more susceptible to world influences.

Masefield's personality is so strong that it comes through, in spite of a prolonged period of experimentation that might almost be called imitation. His early work rings with echoes of Kipling, Yeats, Hardy and Stevenson, to mention only four of the masters who have helped to form him. On his own confession it owes much to the elder poets, Chaucer in particular, and yet it bears the stamp of his own genius. "Salt Water Ballads," however near in spirit, as in phraseology and rhythm, to "Barrack Room Ballads," will live for the swinging sincerity which could have been inspired only by a sailor's love of the sea. "The Everlasting Mercy" and the other verse narratives of country folk owe less to a study of "Tess of the D'Urbervilles" and "The Return of the Native" than to the feeling for the English countryside bred in the bone of a yeoman's son. Works produced in a time of transition, if they have any value at all, take on a dynamic quality from their surroundings, and the last forty years must be reckoned amongst the most troubled and insecure of the world's history. Literary creation cannot be dissociated from the historical background which it reflects. During the period of political storm and stress literature has undergone a transformation the completeness of which is still not fully realised.

Creative art is the tangible expression of mood and emotional reactions the sources of which can be found only by a study of world psychology. It is therefore not to be measured by any foot-rule of criticism. And progress does not come through a forthright advance, but rather by a revolution in endless cycles. The phase of realism develops through naturalism and

impressionism into rationalism, then moves by the stages of symbolism, idealism and romanticism into naturalism again. At the end of the nineteenth century rationalism had played itself out. The time was ripe for a speeding-up of the ever-turning wheel of change, and Masfield, together with every other artist of his age, was caught in the movement that produced the conflicting "isms" of the last generation.

His earliest published work, "Salt Water Ballads," while it owes much to Kipling, goes deeper than anything Kipling ever wrote. We may find implicit in it much that came to fuller expression in the later poems. The keynote is struck in the "Consecration," with its passionate cry of sympathy for the under-dog, beginning:

"Not of the princes and prelates with periwigged charioteers,
Riding triumphantly laurelled to lap the fat of the years,—
Rather the scorned, the rejected—the men hemmed in with the
spears."

The call of the sea has never been more triumphantly voiced than in the opening lines of "Sea-Fever," which cannot be too often quoted:

"I must go down to the seas again, to the lonely sea and the sky,
And all I ask is a tall ship and a star to steer her by,
And the wheel's kick and the wind's song and the white sail's
shaking,
And a grey mist on the sea's face and a grey dawn breaking."

Or in these lines of the companion poem, "A Wanderer's Song":

"A wind's in the heart of me, a fire's in my heels,
I am tired of brick and stone and rumbling wagon-wheels;
I hunger for the sea's edge, the limits of the land,
Where the wild old Atlantic is shouting to the sand."

The publication of "The Everlasting Mercy" in 1911 produced the effect of a literary bombshell. It is hard for us, looking backward after the lapse of little more than a quarter of a century, to comprehend the soul-stifling conventionality left behind by the Victorian age which had martyred Hardy and broken Wilde in a prison cell. We are here concerned, not with the alleged "coarseness" of the poem's language (which is actually refined by comparison with the work of many of Masfield's successors), but with those elements in it that serve as an index to its author's development. It expresses the love of nature and of lowly human creatures, and at the same time the deep spirituality, which characterise romantic literature. In it, Masfield has claimed, with no hesitating voice, his kinship with the Lake poets. He has worked through realism to idealism, winning the solution to the problem of the world's cruelty and injustice after a struggle

that seems remarkably short, if we look back at the earliest of his dramas, the prose play "The Tragedy of Nan," published in 1909. This work has the ugliness of the French realists coupled with the pessimism of Hardy. It opens in bitterness and ends in disillusionment and tragedy. Its gloom is unrelieved by one ray of hope or faith. The note of despair is repeated in another early tragedy, "The Campden Wonder," and its sequel, but after the writing of these two plays it is not struck again. Even the catastrophe of the War, from which so many of his contemporaries have suffered so cruelly, has left Masfield almost untouched. He had attained to the inner serenity that could, if not render him impervious to the horror, at least transcend it, leaving his mind open to its lessons of heroism and the sheer sublimity of a great world convulsion. The prose essays dealing with the War and the lectures delivered in America are remarkable, amongst contemporary literature on similar themes, for a note of noble detachment, rising in "Gallipoli" to an epic grandeur.

Masfield's work, regarded as a whole, is singularly free from ideologies, from political and social theorising. He could never be defined as an "Expressionist." During the feverish pre-War years when Fabians and others were out to remake the world, he touched on social problems, in the novels "Multitude and Solitude" (1909) and "The Street of Today," but lightly and half-heartedly, and his reforming zeal is swept away by the tide of imagination and human sympathy. It is characteristic of the man that the two "causes" which he champions are those of the poorest working classes and of woman's suffrage—for he owns in full measure the chivalry towards woman shared by all romanticists. In the War essays he lets himself go in indignation only once, when he denounces the ambitious princes who make wars, sacrificing their peoples to their lust for power.

The earlier romances, "Martin Hyde," "Jim Davis," "Lost Endeavour" and, the earliest of all, "Captain Margaret," modelled more or less on "Treasure Island," are experiments in the writing of historical adventure stories, rather less accomplished than those of Stevenson. They have all (particularly the last-named, and first-written) an idealism in the delineation of character which owes nothing to any master. Further, they are free from Stevenson's affectations of style. It is significant that Masfield frankly modernises his diction in conversation, making no effort to reproduce the idiom of the period. He prefers artistic truth to artistry, and aims at bringing home character and incident by using the language of his own day. The same effort is apparent in the classical plays and the tales in verse, "The Taking of Helen" and "A Tale of Troy." The method of realistic modernism in narrating classical tales may not be altogether original. It is certainly not peculiar to Masfield, having been employed amongst others by the Austrian Grillparzer in the naturalistic phase of German Romanticism (not to mention Euripides, the first great realist),

but it is probable that the author of "The Taking of Helen" had never heard of earlier experimenters in this special technique, adopted by himself as the fittest form of expression for his purpose.

A discussion of the poems on classical subjects opens up the question of the contrast Masfield offers to his predecessor in the Laureate's office, Sir Robert Bridges. It is a coincidence that both of these writers should have been attracted by Greek themes, but the resemblances between their works are of a merely superficial character, and serve but to emphasise wide divergences of outlook. Bridges is a formalist, standing aloof from his fellow-men in his love of abstract beauty; but Masfield's art is fashioned of the very stuff of life. It is his passion for humanity, his abounding vitality and thirst for action that renders him impatient of the restrictions of form. It is unnecessary here to enumerate the frequent instances of carelessness, even slovenliness, in his verse, which in the opinion of some critics reduces it to bathos. He is saved from bathos by the sincerity and swiftness of his thought, and because he has so much to say cannot pause to polish and revise. At its worst, his style is no more pedestrian than much of Wordsworth, or even Tennyson. At its best, it soars to a flight of sheer inspiration, by reason of the intensity with which the scene described is felt. As an instrument for reproducing the grand and terrible—the storms in "Victorious Troy" and "Multitude and Solitude," the battle in "Gallipoli"—it has never been surpassed. In what other writer shall we find such an intensity of sensation summed up in a few lines, as in this sentence from "Victorious Troy" (or "The Hurrying Angel")?

"It seemed to Dick that if he stayed there long his soul would be blown out of his body and then blown small and then blown tiny and then blown to nothing."

Faults of construction and of diction mar the plays and novels as well as the longer poems. They are discursive, lacking in artistic unity and limited in characterisation, revealing profound understanding of one type only—a compound of heroic simplicity and sensitiveness. This type is delineated with a touching sympathy in "Dauber," the poem relating the sufferings of the artistic temperament in conflict with the uncomprehending world, which must have been dictated by bitter experience. In narrative pure and simple the most successful are the later, imaginative romances, "Sard Harker" and "Odtaa," in which he has thrown aside the conventions of the novel and follows where his own untrammelled fancy leads him.

Of the heroic plays, the most successful is "The Faithful," written at the comparatively early date of 1915. "Pompey the Great" is less satisfying, partly because its idealisation of the hero is obviously forced, and partly because the action suffers from the insistence on a didactic purpose. The most significant of the works cast into dramatic form—from the point

of view of ethical if not of artistic development—are the religious plays. The first of these, "Good Friday," was written in 1916, "The Trial of Jesus" following in 1925 and "Easter" in 1929. They show clearly the trend of his mind towards the spiritual, mark his preoccupation with the deepest problems of human destiny and his unequivocal rejection of a materialistic philosophy. It is curious to note how closely bound up his religious worship is with his love of nature; take, for instance, the Angels' Song from "The Coming of Christ":

"You who have known the darkness slowly yield,
And in the twilight the first blackbird's cry,
Come, with the dripping of the dew new-shaken,
From twigs where yellowing leaves and reddening berries lie,
And seen the colour come upon the fields,
And heard the cocks crow as the thorps awaken,
You know with what a holiness of light
The peace of morning comes and how night goes—
Not goes but, on a sudden, is not, even."

In this poem he has attained to a Shelleyan Pantheism, establishing beyond a doubt his kinship with the Romantic school. All of his later work may be put in the same category. The two children's fairy tales, "The Midnight Folk" and "The Box of Delights," are romanticism of the escapist kind, but even they possess a quality of spiritual insight that raises them to a level above mere exercises in the fantastic. Masfield has announced his confession of faith in no uncertain terms, in the lecture on "Poetry" (1931). After stating that "it is not possible to speak of poetry without submission to something not understood, that is greater than the perishing self," he goes on to that striking piece of symbolism that sounds like the utterance of a priest of the ancient sun cult:

"Poetry is profoundly influenced by the sun. It is best in the lands of vintage and in those sunny years which have been years of good vintage. It does not prosper in the cold, nor in lands where the heat is a burden. It is something vital and of the nature of radiant energy, which is perhaps of the very life of the universe.

"It is not only the wine of the human grape, but wine from the life of the universe. I would say that it is a touching of the Life of the Universe, a lifting into the Universal Mood.

"I believe that the best Poetry has always been a radiant perception of the Life of the Universe, of its Persons, its Powers and its Laws as they exist eternally, and that the mood of poetry in which they are perceived is an undying mood, existing eternally, as the Heart of Life, and that true poetry, which is a living in that mood, and a setting down of its truth, is necessarily eternal, too."

His religion and his poetic faith are a oneness with nature and the universe. The love of all living things is a strikingly romantic feature of his work, coming out most strongly in the lyrics and narrative poems. "Reynard the Fox" has been compared, as a study in contemporary life, with "The Canterbury Tales," from which, however, it becomes strongly differentiated in the second part of the poem, describing the fox's fight for life. The character who arouses the reader's sympathy is the valiant animal, rather than any of the human beings, his natural foes. In "Right Royal," again, the real hero is the horse, not his rider, who gains significance merely through his understanding of the noble brute.

We see then how, in his later work, Masfield has found himself; he stands revealed as a romantic mystic. The stages of realism, rationalism and pessimism through which he has passed were only passing phases, reflections of turbulence in the world outside which obscured for a time, but never extinguished, the light in his own soul.

Possessed

WALKING at fall of dusk on the desolate common,
I heard a sudden tumult of eager voices
Crying within my mind, shaking my spirit
As tremulous catspaws ruffle the tranquil pool.

“Ours are the thoughts that never achieved expression,
Ours is the passion that found no word for its raptures,
Like a speechless infant, the vehement life within us
Stretched out its arms, and died ere it found a tongue.

“We are the dead, who have lived as thou hast never
All thy anæmic days: thou, thou art nothing
But a slender reed-pipe, wrought by immortal fingers
To be blown upon by our spirit, our sounding breath.”

As tremulous catspaws ruffle the tranquil surface,
And pass, and the troubled water resumes its stillness,
So the reiterate voices of this invasion
Passed, and my mind resumed its ancient calm.

Yet, fellow poets, chanters of alien passions,
Singers who sing a grief you have never suffered,
What is this power that shakes us to sudden music,
Whence this knowledge of things we have never known?

May we not be the mouthpiece of dead generations,
Pipes to sound to all modes of human experience,
That the lives which were dumb in life may not be frustrate
Even after death, of the virtue of the word?

Ernest Rhys

By LL. WYN GRIFFITH

FIFTY years ago a young mining engineer came back to the London of his birth to try his fortune with his pen. He was twenty-six years old, and he had spent six years in Wales and twelve in the North of England. His father was a Welshman, his mother a Hertfordshire woman with an Irish strain in her blood. From a father who began as a divinity student and turned wine merchant, and from a mother—a Percival—who eloped with his father, he inherited a gift for the unexpected. For he himself, instead of going to Oxford, decided to become a mining engineer, “tempted by the open-air life and the chance of horses to ride.” Later on, with all the confidence of youth, he abandoned this profession and turned to his vocation.

When Ernest Rhys returned to London in 1885 his endowments were neither numerous nor weighty: some verses, a touch of miners’ lumbago, and a few pounds in money. But he had faith in poetry, in himself, and in the importance of personal contacts. Now that he has reached his fourscore years, he can look back upon his youth and consider himself fortunate, for his faith in poetry is still burning bright, and his genius for friendship has brought him all the spiritual wealth he could desire. The few pounds in money, the miners’ lumbago . . . time ought to have dealt with them by now.

It was in an attic in Chelsea, overlooking the Thames, that Ernest Rhys set up as author, with his few books (they included Turgenev’s “Virgin Soil” and Beddoes’ “Death’s Jest-Book”) and a portrait of Shelley. But he had been reading his contemporaries, and he did not need to be reminded of Coleridge’s verdict: “The great works of past ages seem to a young man things of another race, in respect to which his faculties must remain passive and submiss, even as to the stars and mountains. But the writings of a contemporary, perhaps not many years older than himself, surrounded by the same circumstances, and disciplined by the same manners, possess a reality for him, and inspire an actual friendship as of a man for a man.” Swinburne’s “Songs before Sunrise,” Meredith’s “Tragic Comedians,” Walt Whitman’s “Leaves of Grass,” Mallock’s

"New Republic," and Henry George's "Progress and Poverty" were all fresh in his mind. Tennyson and Browning, Matthew Arnold and Thomas Hardy, William Morris and James McNeill Whistler were famous. Edward Carpenter, Havelock Ellis, Olive Schreiner, Ramsay MacDonald, W. B. Yeats and George Bernard Shaw were on their way to fame. W. T. Stead was editing the "Pall Mall Gazette," Prince Kropotkin, Oscar Wilde, Graham Wallas and Henry Irving were in London. Such were his contemporaries.

Does the literary London of today appear to a new entrant, to a young man of twenty-six in search of a living, to be so overcrowded as it must have been in 1885 when Ernest Rhys came to town? It is hard to say: perhaps this is a question no young man asks of himself. The weight of the world is with him, at twenty-six, and not against him. There is always room for one more, if he be of the right quality. And it is proof enough of Ernest Rhys's quality that he survived his initial disappointments as a reviewer and won his place among the men who helped to shape the nineteenth century. He developed his rare gift for friendship, not only in this country, but even in America, and as early as 1887 he crossed "in a freight steamer from the Tyne with a cargo of Shetland ponies" to see Walt Whitman, Russell Lowell and Oliver Wendell Holmes. Fifty years later, he counts among his friends most of the writers of our day, young and old.

A man of many friendships is not "all things to all men." On the contrary, he stands for one thing to many, and that one must be the gift of being himself, of sincerity and understanding, of intrinsic worth of character. There is no highest common factor in these matters, but there is undoubtedly the very uncommon talent for wide sympathy without loss of individuality, for being ingenuous without lack of depth, for devoted service without slavery.

What was the quality of mind of the man who inspired so many friendships? Let us turn to his lyrics, for a little poetry is often a better witness than much prose.

"Wales England wed so I was bred. 'Twas merry London gave me
breath.
I dreamt of love, and fame: I strove. But Ireland taught me love
was best:
And Irish eyes, and London cries, and streams of Wales, may tell
the rest.
What more than these I asked of Life, I am content to have from
Death."

This poem, called "An Autobiography," is taken from a volume of poems, "A London Rose and other Rhymes," published by John Lane in 1894. Ten years later, in a book called "Lays of the Round Table," he included the following lyric, "The Flower and the Leaf":

"Winter and his blast
Cause a man to cower
And by the winter fire sit fast
Many an hour.

But May and her sweet kind,
Sweet flower and fresh leaf,
Burgeon in a sad man's mind—
End his grief.

Then,—for oh, how brief
Is his burgeoning,—
With the Flower and the Leaf
Let him sing."

Forty-three years after his first book of poems appeared, he sings an "Envoy."

"I have been a Sun-lover
All my days
Loving the early morning light
When the first Sun-shafts are shot
Level along the dewy grass
And every shining after-hour
Of crescent and decrescent rays,
Till the black cloak away is cast,
And day dawns above the moody night."

Throughout his lyrics his own handwriting is plain to see. There is grace of diction as well as a command of his craft, and behind everything the assured vision of a man whose eyes are freshened by his love for the country. It is difficult to think that there was ever a time for him when he

"did not think what memories
Might, time to come, the white light weave
Behind the black-branch'd apple-trees."

To quote from a tribute paid to him by the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion on the award of the Society's medal for service to Wales, a rare distinction:

"In the days when the Celtic Twilight spread over England, all eyes were turned to Ireland; there were occasional glances at Scotland, it is true, but the great magic came across the Irish Sea. The voice of Wales, and its song, were not heard until Ernest Rhys began to speak. His poems shone like a candle in the gloom, and many people began to realise that Wales had something to say to England. His translations from the Welsh, and his original poems, sounded a new note in English literature, and if some have forgotten that this familiar note was ever new, it is a tribute to his pertinacity and to his success."

It is also a tribute to the extent of his labours in literature that no mention has hitherto been made of what, to many people, will seem to be his greatest achievement. "Everyman's Library" is known all over the world: to the general reader and to the student it stands, in its thousand volumes, as the most important of all gateways to the countries of the mind.

"There occurred to me a larger scheme," he tells us; "a collection of the great literatures beginning with the English, so co-ordinated that if its readers began with one creative book they would want another and another till the great public had all the world literature within its grasp. It was a prodigious, hardly practicable idea. How was one to find a collaborator able and keen enough to work it out?"

It so chanced that he found his collaborator in Joseph Malaby Dent, but it is doubtful whether Ernest Rhys, for all his optimism, believed when he set out as Editor of "Everyman's Library" that he would see it approaching its thousandth volume. "There were so many things going on in the world," he says; "one's own books, one's romances, critiques and ballads to be written, one's Celtic and medieval studies to be followed up, and one's weekly articles for the *Manchester Guardian*, dealing with Irish and Welsh topics, to be kept going." It was not his first venture in general editorship, for many will remember with gratitude the "Camelot" series of reprints, a notable predecessor to "Everyman," on a more restricted scale. But in "Everyman," Ernest Rhys set his name to a record of faith and endeavour that will ever remain as a memorial to his vision and his courage.

In the preface to his autobiography, "Everyman Remembers," he promises to supplement and to continue this exciting portrait of himself and of the great figures in the literary world during the last fifty years. There is so much more that he can tell us, so much that he alone can say. We may even learn the secret of his own vitality, and catch something of the fervour that keeps his vitality pointed always to its true direction, poised for action, always at the service of his vocation, with an ear to all that is fine and noble in literature. Let it come soon, this the youngest of his books, for the world has need of inspiration today.

Cradle Poem

I WHO went down into the shadow of death
To clothe in flesh and blood my dearest dream
Have only just begun abasement's theme.
"Lower, yet lower," the voice of victory saith,
"Humbled before his child-humility,
Bow down before his image undefiled.
Offer your best, your uttermost, and see
How poor and flawed a gift your effort brings.
Bow down in your unworthiness, in sighs
That even yet you may be good and wise
If only for the sake of this your child."

I have known the hush and awe before white springs
Of lightning, I have seen the sunrise flame,
Flawless above our wars and waste, and shame
Of cities waked to their deformities,
But never an awe like this: it has no name.

And then he murmurs like a far-off psalm
Forgiving, full of comfort; and my heart,
Suddenly caught up in a great heaven of wings
Where doubts and self-impeachment have no part,
Broods in I know not what eternal calm.

GEOFFREY JOHNSON.

John Buchan, Historian and Statesman

BY JOHN MACFINNAN

JOHN BUCHAN is known to the mass of novel readers as the author of thrillers; in the world of politics he was not prominently in the public eye until his other self, the first Baron Tweedsmuir, appeared to it in the office of Governor-General of Canada. To many, it looks like the Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, the incongruous partnership of a man of letters and a politician within his dual personality. But a careful study of his career reveals no inconsistency. He is a man of wide interests, varied talents and boundless industry, who has steadily followed the road mapped out for himself until it led him to success. In his enormous literary output the serious historical and critical works are more important, in bulk as well as quality, than the lighter novels, the writing of which must have been undertaken as more or less of an intellectual relaxation. In his early period he turned his hand to many kinds of literary work. Besides reflective essays of the type defined in the nineties as "belles lettres" and published by John Lane, he wrote treatises on law, history and criticism, introductions and commentaries on the English classics, from "The Compleat Angler" to Burns's poems, and edited a history of English Literature, passing on later to the editorship of "John Buchan's Annual" and a military history of the War. Much of this was journeyman work, some of it might even be called hack work, but it was all honestly and faithfully accomplished, and proved a valuable apprenticeship to his craft. His earliest writings evince a special interest in the lives of eminent statesmen and colonisers, and he has a series of brilliant biographies to his credit, beginning with "Sir Walter Raleigh" (1897). It is significant that his first essay of this kind should have for subject the founder of England's colonial empire. His keen interest in colonial problems is shown in "The African Colony; studies in the reconstruction" (1903), a broad-minded, judicious attempt to heal the wounds of the Boer War. The personalities that interest him most are those of men who were at the same time great soldiers and great organisers—the Duke of Wellin-

ton, Abraham Lincoln, Oliver Cromwell, Julius Cæsar, Augustus. Like his famous countryman, the author of "Heroes and Hero-worship," he admires the man of action, but he is not misled into underrating the man of thought. Notwithstanding certain resemblances due to their common race, there are fundamental differences between Carlyle and Buchan—the former is a seer, the latter a practical man of affairs. But both are Scotchmen, with broad, imperialistic, international sympathies, but an unswerving loyalty to the land of their birth and the moral ideals of their Protestant upbringing. Buchan turns again and again to Scotch history and literature. The subjects of several of the biographies—as Lord Minto, Lord Rosebery, Gordon of Khartoum, Montrose and Sir Walter Scott—are Scots, a fact which must have given a bias to the choice. That he thoroughly understands the character of his countrymen is shown by the passage from the lecture on "Some Scottish Characteristics" delivered as one of the "Scottish Tongue" series to the Burns Society in London, in which he defines the two master elements in the Scotch character: "These elements are hard-headedness on the one hand and romance on the other: common sense and sentiment: practicality and poetry: business and idealism . . . almost everybody has got both. It is the peculiarity of the Scotch race that it has both in a high degree." And again: "We have the spirit of adventure in our blood, and not only the spirit of adventure, but a power of acclimatising ourselves, of being at home in strange places. We, the most home-loving race in the world, are yet perfectly happy far away from home. . . . That homely grip of fact . . . that poetry, imagination, romance. . . ."

The duality he has pointed out in his race may help to explain the apparent duality in his own character and life work—how the sober statesman may be one with the writer of imaginative romances. In the same essay he defines the true Scot as "The practical idealist," and his wildest flights of fancy are ballasted by the sound commonsense characteristic of his race. The heroes of the novels are no mere adventurous youths, but middle-aged men, the prosaic tenor of whose lives is disturbed by the inexplicable impulse urging them to kick over the traces of respectability. Edward Leithen, Richard Hannay, above all that canny Scot, Dickson McGunn—these are the men who make the tardy discovery of the impish streak in their compositions; and the tale of their vicissitudes holds less of irresponsible sensationalism than a robust vitality of invention.

We are also given a clue to the source of his imperialistic sympathies. The Scot is the most indefatigable and undaunted of colonists, driven by the barrenness of his native soil to emigration as the only hope of making a decent livelihood, but carrying a spiritual citizenship of his native land with him to the remotest corners of the globe. Buchan is an ardent patriot, as his writings, especially the books inspired by the War, prove beyond the possibility of cavil; but his is no narrow local patriotism. He is conscious

of, and proud of, his membership of the British family, the conception of which he deliberately broadens to include the American branch of the Anglo-Saxon race. Speaking of Abraham Lincoln, who, of all the great men he has commemorated, comes nearest to his conception of the ideal hero, he says: "I like to think that in him we see at its highest the kind of character and mind which is the special glory of our common race. He was wholly simple, without vanity or grandiosity or cant. He was a homely man, full of homely common sense and homely humour, but in the great moment he could rise to a grandeur which is for ever denied to posturing, self-conscious talent. He conducted the ordinary business of life in phrases of a homespun simplicity, but when necessary he could attain to a nobility of speech and a profundity of thought which have rarely been equalled. He was a plain man, loving his fellows and happy among them, but when the crisis came he could stand alone. He could talk with crowds and keep his virtue; he could preserve the common touch and yet walk with God." ("Two Ideals of Democracy," a lecture at Milton Academy on the Alumni War Memorial Foundation, October 16th, 1924.)

He has in common with Lincoln the sturdy Protestantism which leads him to write, in the essay on the Union of the Churches: "It should be a Church less of priests than of prophets." He acknowledges the function of religion in the modern state, but it must be a Church with a simplified creed and a rekindled spirit. In the past it has suffered from too much ritual—too much has been made of form and too little of spirit.

The widening of national into imperial ideals, inherent in our history, finds early acceptance and confirmation. He writes of Raleigh (in 1919): "He had always something of that love of the free face of heaven, the salt wind and the fierce delight of action, which is the glory of his race," and he emphasises Raleigh's mission as a colonist. "He regarded the lands as the home of peoples and not the common ground of plunder." Of all historical themes, that which fascinates him most is the growth of empire. His study of King George V., "The King's Grace," has given the opportunity for a masterly summing up of constitutional problems, the solution to which his sound legal training and judicious mind renders him competent to indicate.

Buchan has thus a threefold importance—as a Scot, a Briton and an Imperialist. Sincere and loyal in each of his rôles, which do not conflict with one another, but give mutual support in the full and final development of his character, he is from every point of view fitted to represent a great British Dominion in the eventful and critical years covered by his term of office.

William Butler Yeats

AT the end of January, 1939, the whole English-speaking world mourned a great poet dead. For full forty years the name of W. B. Yeats had been known wherever English poetry was read; year by year an ever-growing circle had been coming under the spell of this master-weaver of words. There was no anthology but held two or three of his poems, from the tiniest of all such gatherings, Gowans and Gray's *Lyric Masterpieces by Living Authors*, to the largest, *Oxford Book of English Verse*. But always the anthologers' fancy seemed to light on the same lyrics: 'The Song of Wandering Ængus,' 'The Lake-Isle of Innisfree,' 'The Cloths of Heaven,' 'The Lover Tells of the Rose in his Heart,' 'When you are old,' a scant half-dozen and all of them taken from the poetry of his formative period before world-contacts and controversies had yet hardened his fibre. Yet there is much of the later work of Yeats that will repay study, so evident and clear is his development as artist throughout the course of a long and well-filled life.

Born in Sligo, and brought up partially there and partially in Dublin, his family moved to London in 1887, as he tells us himself in *Four Years* (1921). And it was in London, like many another Irish writer, that he first found Ireland and found the urge to write: "... when walking through Fleet Street very homesick, I heard a little tinkle of water and saw a fountain in a shop window which balanced a little ball upon its jet, and began to remember lake-water. From the sudden remembrance came my poem 'Innisfree,' my first lyric with anything in its rhythm of my own music." But that must have happened about 1890, and already he had been writing poetry for at least four years. While still in Dublin he had sat at the feet of John O'Leary, the great full-bearded Fenian who seemed a type of the great Fianna of old as well as of those of a latter day. He had helped in a little sixpenny anthology called *Poems and Ballads of Young Ireland*, published in 1888, and had dedicated it to John O'Leary with these lines:

"Because you suffered for the cause;
Because you strove with voice and pen
To serve the Law above the laws
That purifies the hearts of men;

Because you failed, and grew not slack,
 Not sullen, nor disconsolate;
 Nor stooped to seek a lower track,
 But showed your soul a match for Fate;
 Because you hated all things base,
 And held your country's honour high;
 Because you wrought in Time and Space
 Not heedless of Eternity;
 Because you loved the nobler part
 Of Erin; so we bring you here
 Words such as once the nation's heart
 On patriot lips rejoiced to hear:
 Strains that have little chance to live
 With those that Davis' clarion blew,
 But all the best we have to give
 To mother Erin and to you."

There too appears for the first time 'The Madness of King Goll,' with its ever-repeated burthen 'They will not hush, the leaves a-flutter round me, the beech leaves old,' and 'The Stolen Child,' reminding one somewhat of Allingham but with memorable lines like :

"Where the wandering water gushes
 From the hills above Glen-Car
 In pools among the rushes
 That scarce could bathe a star,
 We seek for slumbering trout
 And whispering in their ears
 We give them evil dreams
 Leaning softly out
 From ferns that drop their tears
 Of dew on the young streams.
 Come, O human child,
 To the woods and waters wild
 With a fairy, hand in hand
 For the world's more full of weeping than you
 can understand."

'The Meditation of the Old Fisherman' is there also—"When I was a boy with never a crack in my heart," and the last poem of all is a translation of one verse of Gaelic song, 'Éamonn an Chnuic,' which shows what loveliness he might have fashioned out of our Irish songs if he had followed his friends Edward Martyn and Douglas Hyde in the genuine Gaelic tradition.

"My love, we will go, we will go, I and you,
 And away in the woods we will scatter the dew;
 And the salmon behold, and the ousel too,
 My love, we will hear, I and you, we will hear,
 The calling afar of the doe and the deer,

And the bird in the branches will cry for us clear,
 And the cuckoo unseen in his festival mood;
 And death, oh my fair one, will never come near
 In the bosom afar of the fragrant wood."

It was no ill company that made up that handful of verse, for among his companions were T. W. Rolleston, Douglas Hyde, Katherine Tynan, names which live in well-wrought poetry.

In London at the Cheshire Cheese he fraternised with Lionel Johnson and Ernest Dowson, Ernest Rhys and Richard Le Gallienne, John Todhunter and T. W. Rolleston, and many of his early lyrics first saw print in *The Book of the Rhymers' Club* (1892 and 1894), two much-prized volumes wherein so many *primatiæ* appeared.

Around the nucleus of the Southwark Irish Literary Society he founded, with the help of Rolleston, the Irish Literary Society (which still flourishes); and soon after a similar society sprang up in Dublin, in which he was also interested. The principal aim of both societies was to interest the educated classes in the songs and stories and sagas of Ancient Ireland as material for creative work in literature.

His writings at this period are filled with the ideal of spending all his talents for Ireland, for the "little dark rose."

"Know that I would accounted be
 True brother of a company
 That sang to sweeten Ireland's wrong
 Ballad and story rann and song.

Nor may I less be counted one
 With Davis, Mangan, Ferguson
 Because to him who ponders well,
 My rhymes more than their rhyming tell
 Of things discovered in the deep
 Where only body's laid asleep.

I cast my heart into my rhymes
 That you, in the dim coming times
 May know how my heart went with them
 After the red-rose-bordered hem."

Thus ran the epilogue 'To Ireland in the coming times,' which he set at the end of *The Rose* (1893), a book that holds many of the poems on which Yeats's fame securely rests. In 1899 appeared *The Wind among the Reeds*, with many songs in the same genre, a wistful longing and a tender appreciation of the half-hidden world of fairydom. Not that all his songs have that ethereal quality—which soon came to be known to cynics as "the Celtic twilight," "the opal hush" or "the misty moonshine." Some of his ballads, 'Father Gilligan,' 'Father O'Hart,' 'The Fiddler of Dooney,' have all the simplicity and directness of the genuine countryside ballad.

And to this, his first and most popular period, belongs one other book, *In the Seven Woods* (1904), a book which gave us 'The folly of being comforted,' 'Never give all the heart,' 'The old men admiring themselves' and that great act of adoration which he called 'Red Hanrahan's song about Ireland.'

Never again did Yeats the poet (unless perhaps with "Easter, 1916," his tribute to those martyrs who had been his friends, who had followed the red-rose-bordered hem even to the gallows), never again did he touch the heart of the Irish people. He had lashed them with magnificent scorn for their petty huckstering and crawl-thumping in that wicked invective which is his last tribute (1913) to John O'Leary.

"Was it for this the wild geese spread
The grey wing upon every tide
For this that all the blood was shed
For this Edward Fitzgerald died
And Robert Emmet and Wolfe Tone
All that delirium of the brave?
Romantic Ireland's dead and gone
It's with O'Leary in the grave."

But it was not so. For before three years were out Ireland awoke to the dream of John O'Leary while Yeats still gloomed and glowered and argued,

"Fooling with trifles in the dark
When the light struck so bright and hard,"

as another poet has said. It was he, and not the people of Ireland, who had fallen asleep; and it was a younger group of poets and dreamers (disciples of his own, many of them) who led them out "at the rising of the moon."

For the drama and controversy had remoulded this older Yeats. It is doubtful if he would ever have made a permanent home in Ireland had not his interest in drama quickened and the opportunity for theatrical experiment been laid before him. It is equally doubtful if that hardening of thought, that reshaping of values which are significant of his middle years, would ever have been wrought.

Dramatic sense he had always had; a feeling for the tense moment, the climax in story or ballad. It breaks out in *The Celtic Twilight* in the story of Mary Hynes, whom Raftery praised in 'Ballylee,' "Dust hath closed Helen's eye." And in the *Stories of Red Hanrahan* there is many a moment of high drama, though none to equal this where the wandering poet Hanrahan (Yeats's own figure for his groping, wandering self) is seated amid a houseful of poor wanderers, singing:

"Of a sudden his singing stopped and his eyes grew misty as if he was looking at some far thing. 'You would not go away from us, my heart,' said Margaret, catching him by the hand."

“‘It is not of that I am thinking,’ he said, ‘but of Ireland and the weight of grief that is on her.’ And he leaned his head against his hand, and began to sing these words, and the sound of his voice was like the wind in a lonely place.

“The old brown thorn trees break in two high over Cummen
Strand
Under a bitter black wind that blows from the left hand;
Our courage breaks like an old tree in a black wind and dies,
But we have hidden in our hearts the flame out of the eyes
Of Cathleen the daughter of Hoolihan.

“The wind has bundled up the clouds high over Knocknarea
And thrown the thunder on the stones for all that Maeve can say;
Angers that are like noisy clouds have set our hearts abeat,
But we have all bent low and low and kissed the quiet feet
Of Cathleen the daughter of Hoolihan.

“The yellow pool has overflowed high up on Clooth-na-Bare,
For the wet winds are blowing out of the clinging air;
Like heavy flooded waters our bodies and our blood,
But purer than a tall candle before the Holy Rood
Is Cathleen the daughter of Hoolihan.

While he was singing, his voice began to break, and tears came rolling down his cheeks, and Margaret Rooney put down her face into her hands and began to cry along with him. Then a blind beggar by the fire shook his rags with a sob, and after that there was no one of them all but cried tears down.”

His first plays had all the beauty, all the serenity, of his earlier poetry, born of the same dream world. *The Countess Cathleen*, *The Shadowy Waters*, *The King's Threshold*, and that most lovely of all *The Land of Heart's Desire*

“Where nobody gets old and godly and grave
Where nobody gets old and crafty and wise
Where nobody gets old and bitter of tongue,”

with its fairy song, ever recurring:

“The wind blows out of the gates of the day
The wind blows over the lonely of heart
And the lonely of heart is withered away
While the faeries dance in a place apart
Shaking their milk-white feet in a ring
Tossing their milk-white arms in the air
For they hear the wind laugh and murmur and sing
Of a land where even the old are fair
And even the wise are merry of tongue.”

To my mind his greatest dramatic triumph is *Deirdre*, where, within the compass of one act, with consummate stage-craft, he has given us the full tragedy of that wonderful epic of love and jealousy and sacrifice. There is a nobility of language in this verse play which lifts it high above much of his other work, and yet it flows naturally, with many a fine phrase to be quoted and remembered.

"I have believed the best of every man
And find that to believe it is enough
To make a bad man show him at his best
Or even a good man swing his lantern higher."

But, from the first hint of trouble at the theatre, when it became clear in 1907 that a considerable section of the people of Dublin were angered by *The Playboy* and Yeats's arrogant defence of it—the story has been often told, indeed it is the climax of the Abbey Theatre's history—the drama and the controversy it brought were little joy to the heart of Yeats.

Anger and acrimony, scorn and contempt, are not the soil where grows good poetry or good drama, either. Fierce invective, wounding epigram, wicked satire, these filled the years, and wider and wider grew the gulf between Yeats and Ireland. Colder and more formal were now the verses, for even his own earlier work shared in the general despising. So in 1914 he could write:

"I made my song a coat
Covered with embroideries
Out of old mythologies
From heel to throat;
But the fools caught it,
Wore it in the world's eyes
As though they'd wrought it.
Song, let them take it
For there's more enterprise
In walking naked."

Thus, with a few brief awakenings when old loyalties stirred and some of the olden magic returned, W. B. Yeats passed on towards the shadows. Like many another of the old Ascendancy he found little to love in the newer order in Ireland. To him the magnificent crimes of the older régime were more noble than the petty virtues of the new. And towards the end his mind was all bemused with strange occult philosophies, theosophy, spiritism; and in play or poem these were given an airing, without even full conviction to defend them.

And yet, though far he had strayed, this was the man who once had written, in all the youthful wonder of belief:

"He who hath made the night of stars
For souls who tire and bleed
Sent one of His great angels down
To help me in my need."

“He who is wrapped in purple robes
 With planets in His care
 Had pity on the least of things
 Asleep upon a chair.”

Into the great procession of the Masters of English Literature W. B. Yeats has stepped, with fitting laurels on his head, a prolific poet, a skilled dramatist, a writer of jewelled prose. But Ireland will think kindly of him because, when young, he saw her visions and he dreamed her dreams.

COLM O LOCHLAINN.

The Pilgrim Soul

*"But one man loved the pilgrim soul in you,
And loved the sorrows of your changing face."*
W. B. YEATS.

AND there's the needle's eye at end of all.
Thus spake the wise Oonah, when the mouths were green
Of the starved tenantry whose instant call
Came to the Countess, to the good Cathleen,
So that she bartered for the price of bread
Out of her bosom's field her pilgrim soul.
Now he who sang her to the hills is dead,
He who was prodigal of his bed-roll
Has passed the needle's eye and found a lawn
Undiapered by sapling's shade or bird's.
He has attained unto another dawn.
He who was prodigal of lovely words
Has sung his last, and put his cloak away.

*"I will arise and go that I may see
And hear the inland waters call the day
My pilgrim soul fared back to Innisfree."*

Thus might he chant, as on the flood's full breast
The dying swan in dissolution sings.
Now peace comes dropping from the quiet West,
Far from the pavements and the wheel of things.
C. R. ALLEN.

Henry Handel Richardson

By ARNOLD GYDE

AUSTRALIA need well be proud of Henry Handel Richardson. For many critics have placed the Australian whose books bear this name as perhaps the greatest novelist of our days, or at any rate the greatest of all women novelists.

When she had brought her trilogy on Australian life *The Fortunes of Richard Mahony* to a magnificent conclusion, Gerald Gould wrote in the *Observer* that: "This book is a masterpiece, worthy to rank with the greatest and saddest masterpieces of our day." He added in the *Daily News*: "It is not merely a work of genius, it is a work of genius assured and triumphant. . . . *I must record my belief that if our age has produced a masterpiece at all, this is a masterpiece.*"

Mr. St. John Ervine has written: "I know of no modern novel in which the stuff of life is so firmly handled as in this work. There is no living woman novelist in this country who is fit to have her books on the same shelf as hers, and the number of men who are entitled to that honour is small."

Mr. Ernest Newman, the music critic, is recorded as having said that *The Fortunes of Richard Mahony* is a "truly great performance—one of the really big things in fiction, which has moved me in a way certain kinds of great music do."

But of the woman behind this achievement little was known; her quiet life in the tall house beside Regent's Park in London remained undisturbed by the hubbub her success created.

She was the daughter of a Melbourne doctor who had emigrated from Leicestershire. She was educated at the Presbyterian Ladies' College, some years after Melba left, and she subsequently made it the subject of her second book, *The Getting of Wisdom*. Many years after, when she returned to Australia on a visit, she went to see her old school. But the authorities, having imagined that the school was derogatively treated, refused her admission.

When her father died, she and her sister persuaded their mother to take them to Leipzig. They both had music ambitions, and she wished to study the piano at a great European conservatorium.

Here she soon realised that she would never be a pianist of the European concert class, and she abandoned the project. Meanwhile the multi-coloured picture of student life, with its fresh ambitions and bitter failures, inspired her with the idea of writing a novel.

At this time she met J. G. Robertson, a student of German and Scandinavian languages, who had come from Scotland. They fell in love, but owing to the difficulties of getting married abroad the ceremony was performed from the house of a friend in Dublin.

Afterwards they spent some time in Munich. Her husband was *The Times* correspondent for German literature, and that gave her the entrée to the great libraries. It was not, however, until they settled in Strasbourg (then in Germany) that the story of student life in Leipzig was begun.

It was called *Maurice Guest*, and was not finished until she and her husband had settled in England, where he had become a master at Harrow. It was offered to William Heinemann, who immediately accepted it, but advised the "cutting" of no less than 20,000 words. "It was like cutting off the fingers on my hand," she told her American publisher Norton, "but I shall never cease to be glad that I did it."

When it appeared in 1908, John Masefield wrote of it in the *Evening News*: "It is presented to us with an intimacy which none but a master can ever attain to. It is difficult to say what the book means for us, for it means so much. It is a chapter in the spirit of youth, a history of the romance of youth, with its waywardness, its sadness, its beauty." But he added that it would take twenty years for her to be recognised.

H. G. Wells, writing to the author on the publication of her second book in 1910, said: "I've been reading your *The Getting of Wisdom* with enormous admiration—to the point even of writing and telling you so. Your little rag of a girl is a most adorable little beast, and I shall live largely in the hope of reading your history of the rest of her life. And the way it is done is wonderful; I don't think that particular thing could have been done better."

The first volume of the mighty Australian trilogy was called *Australia Felix*; it was published in the darkest days of the war when literary criticism was virtually dead. It fell flat. So did the middle volume, *The Way Home*, which appeared in 1925. But this is what generally happens to the middle slice of most big works. Thus it was not until *Ultima Thule* brought the work to its end in 1929, revealing the great scope of it, that the literary world awoke to the magnitude of her achievement.

Professor Robertson, who had meanwhile become Professor of Scandinavian languages at Bedford College, died in 1933. On his death he was mourned far and wide as the greatest authority on Goethe that England had given the world. Indeed, he had been President of the Goethe Society for some years. His death caused delay in Henry Handel Richardson's

next book, as ill-health delayed her last. *The End of a Childhood* (1934) is a volume of short stories very much in the mood and manner of *The Getting of Wisdom*. It takes the reader back to Australia and gives him one more glimpse of Mahony's son.

Henry Handel Richardson now began what was to be technically by far the most difficult of her books to write. It was a novel about that Cosima, Liszt's daughter and von Bülow's wife, until she deserted him for Richard Wagner. It is a novel, but it is also true inasmuch as every possible fact, statement and quotation come from known documents concerning the trio.

This was published in January, 1939, and the musical world is still discussing the problems arising from it with gusto, for Wagner and Cosima, even in their own words, produce themselves in a new light.

In the meantime, this great Australian is biding her time in the house above the Hastings Downs. She has several more books to write, and every drop of her strength must be husbanded.

From Far and Near

By "LISTENER-IN"

SINCE the publication of last year's ANNUAL three considerable figures have been removed from the world of English letters. Dr. Lascelles Abercrombie died in October, 1938, William Butler Yeats and Dr. Havelock Ellis in 1939. A fourth, Ford Madox (Huéffer) Ford, who died last June, if less than these, has also an assured place as poet and critic. Each of these men has rendered a definite service to his generation, broadening the scope and outlook of literature. The work of William Butler Yeats is dealt with elsewhere in this volume. As the greatest figure in the Irish School, he opened up a new world of poetic imagination. Abercrombie's positive achievement may be less great, but he deserves to live as a poet, critic and teacher. His influence has been widespread and will be enduring. As lecturer at Liverpool University and professor at Leeds he made an important contribution to the diffusion of culture in the provinces, which is being carried on by the provincial universities, before receiving the appointments in London and Oxford which closed his academic career. He belonged to the generation after that of Yeats and Havelock Ellis, was the contemporary and for a time the close associate of John Drinkwater and Rupert Brooke. Havelock Ellis, who died last July at the age of eighty, is best known for his "Studies in the Psychology of Sex," which shocked English respectability in the nineties, but he has left a considerable body of literary work—verse, essays and criticism—and made known in England the work of Ibsen, Nietzsche and other Continental writers.

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This comment on Mr. Colm O Lochlainn's account of the President of Ireland, published in the ANNUAL for 1938, has been sent us by Mrs. W. Garland Foster, of Vancouver:

"The story about Dr. Douglas Hyde interested me very much, as I have often thought that he gave considerable impetus to literature in Canada in the last years of the nineteenth century. Your historian does not mention that Dr. Hyde, when a young man, was a professor of English at the University of N.B., where he made a name for him-

self, and started off a goodly number of writers of Canadian literature. He was followed by Dr. W. F. Stockley, also a Dublin man, who kept up and further extended his influence. I venture to say there was a time when Dr. Hyde was better known in Canada than in Ireland!"

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The article on "The Australian Novel," by Edith M. Fry, published in last year's ANNUAL, has called forth lengthy comment in the Australian press. Critics writing there and to the Editor have urged the claims of novelists not mentioned in the article. Mr. Guy Innes, in his air-mail review for the *Sydney Sun*, points out two serious omissions—Louis Stone, one of the first to portray Australian city life with realism, and Joseph Furphy, author of "Rigby's Romance." Xavier Herbert's "Capricornia," also mentioned by Mr. Innes, falls within the large class of novels published within the last few years with which it was impossible to deal owing to limitations of space. The opportunity is offered to some writer familiar with contemporary Australian letters to come forward and complete the survey.

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The award of the Nobel Prize for Literature to Mrs. Pearl Buck has caused surprise in some quarters, but may with better reason be defended and is significant in its recognition of the trend of modern culture. The work of Mrs. Buck, so well known not merely to English-speaking readers but over the entire world, is at once democratic and international in spirit, and this is the secret of its success. It stands for the breakdown of tradition but is not destructive; it seeks rather to build up a new culture by going back to the primitive beginnings, the simple loves and joys and sorrows of humble people. The author is conscious of her mission but never becomes dogmatic, and there is no greater art than this. Mrs. Buck has much in common with the Lake poets and other romanticists, and may be in the vanguard of the coming romantic revival.

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The year opened disastrously with the loss of two important literary reviews. The *Criterion* ceased publication in January, and the *London Mercury* followed it in May to the limbo of defunct periodicals, letting its mantle fall on the shoulders of *Life and Letters Today*. The editors have ascribed their action to the political events which have distracted the attention of the reading public from art and literature. Whether the alarms and excursions of last year are directly responsible for the débâcle may be questioned. They may have hastened a consummation which would have been reached sooner or later in any case. The havoc wrought

amongst literary magazines is a sign of the times, a process that has been going on for years. The two latest victims were pre-deceased by the *Bookman*, the *English Review*, the *Athenæum* and *Nation* and a score of minor periodicals that flourished in the post-War period.

The *London Mercury* will be missed by a larger circle than its distinguished contemporary. Under the editorship of Mr. R. A. Scott-James it had widened its interests and, especially in its review columns, manifested a broad and catholic spirit, encouraging the best in modern literature. The *Criterion* was more eclectic, laying itself deliberately open to the charge of being the organ of a coterie. It was the official voice of a small group of writers, the most eminent of whom—Mr. T. S. Eliot, Mr. W. H. Auden and Mr. Stephen Spender—owe their growing reputations largely to its support. In the case of a new doctrine, whether in art or in literature, a policy of exclusiveness is almost a condition of survival, and, once the innovations have been generally accepted, the need for an organ to introduce or maintain them ceases to be urgent. One may contend that the work of the *Criterion* was done. The gospel of Expressionism, of which it was the apostle, has been dead for a decade; was, in fact, not the final aim, even of its most devoted disciples, but a stage on the way to something higher. The *Germ*, the organ of the pre-Raphaelite brotherhood, had a very short life; the brotherhood itself did not outlive it, but the art of Rossetti and those associated with him has been a potent force working up to our own day. The symbol of the germ is an apt one. A plant in the normal process of growth will burst both the seed and the pot that is too small to contain it. We hope that the *Criterion* poets will develop beyond the narrow limits of a poetic creed that threatened to cramp and confine them.

The critical function of Mr. Eliot's periodical had become more important than its services to creative art. He is a critic of unusual distinction, who has performed a great service for letters by crystallising into definite form the fuzziness of diction and thought left behind as a legacy to our time by the Victorian age. It is fortunate that his influence will continue to make itself felt through other channels.

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The question of the decay of literary periodicals is a serious one, which cannot be dismissed by a passing reference to the political events of the last year or two. It is bound up with the decay of poetry and the higher forms of prose literature and the rapid transformation that is taking place in the general attitude towards culture. In the past, the literary reviews have been the chief means of making reputations; in the case of poets perhaps the only means. The days when a review in the *Athenæum* or publication in the *English Review* was sufficient to make a new writer

famous have gone, never to return. What is the reason for the sudden decline of these once powerful journals?

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The editors—past and present—of such periodicals are unanimous on one point. Talent is not wanting. They have the support of sufficient writers of standing to continue with no diminution of literary lustre. If they come to grief, it is on the rock of financial difficulties, produced by the increase in production costs, which is not offset by loyal support from the public and, above all, the publishers. This seems to be the crux of the problem, into which it would be well to inquire. Why do the public neglect the literary reviews? Why will the publishers not advertise in them?

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Has the reading public diminished by reason of the change of living conditions bringing about the decrease in the leisured class? This may certainly account for something, the counter-attractions of wireless and the cinema for something more; but the last-named factors are to be regarded as symptoms rather than as causes of the revolution in taste. The more even distribution of wealth and, above all, the rush and worry of modern life tend to eliminate the class that used to make a hobby of art and letters. It is not a matter of money alone—there are few of the world's workers who could not afford 2s. a month for a literary magazine if they really wanted it—but the struggle to get a living destroys the capacity for intellectual enjoyment. One's faculties are too used up to admit the appreciation of poetry and the fine arts. The old type of patron has practically died out, and the minds of both rich and poor in our generation are too preoccupied with practical matters to seek after the spiritual, the intellectual or the æsthetic.

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Yet one cannot believe that the disposition towards these forms of enjoyment has entirely disappeared. Even in our noisy days there must still be a few who yearn for the quiet communion with fellow minds that only good reading can give. There are many who would read poetry, for instance, if it were placed before them, but they have not the time or the determination to seek it out. Formerly, one could find the way to the poets through the literary reviews, but this road is now practically closed. Book criticism is being taken over by the great daily newspapers, most of which make their selection on broad, popular lines.

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The rise of reviewing in the daily newspapers of the more popular type is taken by most people to be a good thing. It has been accompanied by a corresponding rise in the space devoted to publishers' announcements in these papers, and the money paid for these advertisements is in many cases withdrawn from the more exclusive literary periodical. The tendency is to advertise the more popular, ephemeral kind of book in the hope of catching the big public and landing a "best seller," while the book of more permanent value is neglected. Upon the worth of the criticism published in the popular dailies it would be invidious to express an opinion. It may be stated without hesitation that the reputation for honesty and disinterestedness of most well-known critics is above question. At the same time, editors would be less than human if they were entirely uninfluenced in the selection of books to be reviewed by the advertisement columns of the paper. In any case, both reviewers and editors are necessarily bound to consider the tastes of their readers, and to lean towards the more popular type of book in which the majority of newspaper readers would be interested. This tends to crowd out the book of quality which in the old days when the literary reviews set the standard was sure of its place, while the sensational novel went without any notice at all. And it may be said that the novel can do without notice, for this sort of thing will find its proper level, its market and its way to the public's heart by other means, but if the serious work is not reviewed it falls stillborn from the press.

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In this connection, it is interesting to follow a recent controversy between the *Library Review* and the *Bookseller* on the subject of "Books and Publicity." Mr. Stanley Snaith, writing in the former, deplors the fact that an issue of one of the great Sunday newspapers contains only nineteen columns of book reviews to twenty-three columns of book advertisements. He writes: "Week by week the pages of the *Observer* and the *Sunday Times* are being invaded and devoured by the advertisements (growing ever larger and more competitive) of a certain section of the publishing trade." The *Bookseller* retorts that it is only the advertisements that make book reviewing possible in papers with national circulations. This may be true, although we seem to remember a time when the leading Sunday as well as daily newspapers printed reviews to an extent not so disproportionate to the advertisements. If the book trade is being benefited by the modern practice, it is the commoner, inferior type of book that is reaping the largest profits, while the book of quality is being crowded out, both by the intrusive advertisements and by the more popular trend in reviewing. As Mr. Snaith says, "Reasoned opinion is being remorselessly elbowed out."

It seems that reviews have no longer the force they used to have. In this hectic, hurried age, perhaps few people take the time to read them through. Instead, the eye turns to the advertisement which, with its black head-lines and bold unqualified statements, challenges its attention. But one begins to doubt whether, in these days of Book Clubs and Books of the Month, when the docile public will consume whatever literary fare is placed before it, people read even the advertisements. Who does read them, then? The publishers certainly do not place them, at great expense, just for fun. The answer is obvious. They are there for the convenience of the bookseller, and in particular of the wholesaler, who assumes that there will be a demand for the advertised article and gives his orders accordingly. It is by no means uncommon to find, in advertisements in trade papers, statements by publishers that fabulous sums have been spent in advertising certain books. The bookseller, being caught in the whirl of this machine-made civilisation, and unfortunately not always having very decided tastes or views about literature, allows himself to be bludgeoned into buying them. We are of opinion that conditions were better both for literature and for the trade when he made his selection for ordering stock after conning the reviews in the *Athenæum* or the *London Mercury*.

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There seems to be no limit to the lengths some publishers will go in crying their wares. It was once said that publishing is the most dishonest of all trades. We do not believe this is true. It does less than justice to the ingenuity and inventiveness of the vendor of quack medicines. But the conditions under which the publisher's business is carried on render it possible for him to make spectacular statements which the public has no means of disproving. One of these is the "best-seller" stunt.

Nothing succeeds like success. If you can convince the public that 100,000 people have already bought a book, there is every reason to hope that another 100,000 will rush to buy it, if only out of curiosity. Now, if a publisher makes unguarded statements about a book's sales in its country of origin he is likely to be caught tripping, but there is less risk in reporting sensational figures from across the Atlantic. This may be one reason why so many alleged American successes have recently been put on the English market. There must be some explanation for the phenomenon, for we can hardly believe that the publisher is compelled to seek so far afield by the poverty of the material nearer at hand. The country that produced Shakespeare, Scott, Dickens and Charlotte Brontë is fertile enough of potential best-sellers for anyone who takes the trouble to look for them.

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Apropos of the "best-seller in America," we take the liberty of quoting the shrewd and outspoken author of the "At Random" column in the *Bookseller* of June 8th: "This is becoming one of the most tedious advertising clichés, and sometimes the evidence justifying its use is (shall I say?) less than obvious. For instance, in last Sunday's *Observer*, Gollancz boldly described 'I Swear by Apollo' as 'the astonishing Doctor's autobiography that is sweeping America.' This statement puzzles me. I happen to have by me the last seven issues of the *New York Herald Tribune Books Supplement*, and each of these issues contains a carefully tabulated list of the forty-five best-sellers of the week. In none of these lists can I find mention of 'I Swear by Apollo.' Nor can I find it in any of the best-seller lists that have appeared in the *Publisher's Weekly* since the book was published in August last. In all these lists, I should mention, autobiographies by *other* doctors have recently been included."

The article continues:

"How much more confidence is inspired by an advertisement I saw last week in the *Saturday Review of Literature*. Alfred A. Knopf headed an elegantly displayed double-column for Peter de Polnay's *Angry Man's Tale* with the lines: 'Not the book of the year. Not even the book of the month. But, just the same, a novel that will, I am confident, please and repay perhaps a thousand or so readers of the *Saturday Review*.' That heading startled me into attention; I eagerly read the copy beneath. Why? Simply because it had the ring of truth."

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One may doubt whether the present-day fashion of competitive advertising really benefits anybody, even those publishers who can afford to indulge in it. The first one in the field no doubt reaped a harvest, but by drawing in the others in self-preservation he merely established a system of cut-throat competition by which all will suffer in the long run, while the increased cost of books to the public will nullify the good effects of the increased publicity.

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There are infallible signs that all is not well in the publishing world. One of these is the way in which old-established, reputable firms are dropping out of the race and others are forced into combines or amalgamations. John Lane took over Boriswood, Ltd., on April 30th of this year. Methuen and Chapman and Hall joined forces last May, the latter firm having joined Geoffrey Bles a year ago. Last year also saw the amalgamation of Peter Davies and Lovat Dickson. The ominous factor in these happenings is that the literary houses with a distinctive character are passing away

or becoming merged in others. The process which began when Hutchinson's swallowed seven smaller firms ten years ago is being accelerated until it seems as though in a few more years a few huge combines will remain in possession of the field.

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This situation is a serious one for the future of literature and in particular for the young author. It was the small, exclusive publisher with a literary flair who in the past has given his chance to so many writers of genius. To cite only a few instances, the early publishers of John Massfield were Wells Gardner, Darton and Co., Grant Richards and the poet himself, who had two books printed by the Letchworth Garden City Press, which were afterwards taken over by Messrs. Heinemann. John Buchan began his career under the ægis of John Lane, which also sheltered the first flights of Priestley and a host of others. The reputation of P. C. Wren was made by Heath Cranton, whom the grateful author regretfully deserted for John Murray, succumbing to the temptation of a higher advance on account of royalties. In the interesting series of articles on the early struggles of great writers, published recently in *John o' London's Weekly*, Sir Hugh Walpole paid a handsome tribute to Mr. Martin Secker, but omitted to explain how he came to leave Secker for Macmillan.

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It may be urged that the young writer has more to hope for from the wealthy publisher who can afford to take a risk on his work. The answer to this is, he doesn't—and for obvious reasons. A publisher who can have best-sellers for the asking is not prone to waste any time or attention on the beginner. It has always been left to the small, distinctive houses to discover newcomers of promise. And it is hard to decide whether the author makes the publisher's fortune or *vice versa*. Perhaps the authors who have been lured away from their first sponsors would have sold as well if they had remained loyal to them—but most authors are not made that way. The solitary instance we can recall is that of William Locke, who resisted all offers to leave John Lane and whose death was a blow from which the firm never recovered. Or it may be a question not merely of the loyalty of authors, but also of business etiquette amongst publishers. Doctors and lawyers have an unwritten code in such matters which forbids them from stealing a patient or a client from a colleague, and it is by finesses of this sort that the professions are distinguished from vulgar trade. Publishers keen on obtaining the recognition of their professional status might regard this as a matter to be taken up by the Publishers' Association.

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Another matter recommended to the consideration of that influential body is the question of over-production, which is at the root of the present crop of troubles. Speculative publishing based on the returns of boom years is responsible for the outpouring of an ever-increasing spate of inferior books which their sponsors try to force on the public with the aid of extensive and expensive advertising. Everyone is agreed that too many books are being produced, but no one publisher seems inclined to restrict his output. It should not be hard for the Publishers' Association to estimate the number of books of various types that could be safely put on the market in a normal year, and to pledge its members to draw up their lists accordingly, after mutual consultation and open discussion. This simple expedient would put an end to the mad race of unrestricted competition, the "get-rich-quick" spirit amongst publishers that may too often be translated "get-bankrupt-quick." And it would facilitate a return to quality publishing. The quality book is after all the best and surest investment. It will go on selling for years, long after the political pamphlets and sensational novels are forgotten. The fact that the large combines have suffered from the present slump no less than the smaller firms is a proof that the policy of mass-production and advertising has failed.

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A similar scheme to be preceded by a "publishers' armistice" is outlined by Mr. Alistair J. B. Paterson in the Summer Number of the *Library Review*. Unless publishers take some such action on their own initiative he foresees an alarming alternative—that the authors will take matters into their own hands by the formation of authors' guilds. The guilds would consist of established authors who would employ a manager from the ranks of existing publishing. Each guild would publish its own members' work only, and the authors would receive the total receipts from their books, minus costs, instead of royalties. This scheme has a superficially attractive look (for authors), but it would undoubtedly founder on the obvious rocks in the way. The first is the authors' notorious lack of business ability; when authors are incapable of managing even their own business affairs without the assistance of an agent, how can they be expected to run the business side of a guild? The probabilities are that the manager would "do" them handsomely, to the great benefit of his own pocket, and they would find themselves a good deal worse off than in the old bad days of commercial publishing. The second rock would be the encouragement given to cliquism, the shutting out of new talent that is a phenomenon of art societies and literary academies the world over. For the saddest paradox of the present situation is that, while far too many books are being produced, it is harder than ever for the young author to obtain a hearing.

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A sinister development of the situation is the rise of the so-called "vanity publishers." As it becomes increasingly difficult for the young writer to get into print except at his own expense, these experts in the confidence trick make a lucrative business of "publishing" for him, and pocketing a handsome profit on the printing bill. The operations of some of these pseudo-publishers extend very far afield, and the inexperienced writer is entrapped by flattering letters about his work, requesting the honour of bringing out his book. As no discrimination is exercised in the selection, and no qualification is required, other than the ability of the victim to pay, books put out by such publishers receive no reviews in the journals which count, and this form of publication does the writer concerned more harm than good.

A determined crusade against this abuse has been started by Dr. Joanna Brandt, of the Harmony Press. Established in Johannesburg since 1916 and in New York since 1928, this firm has now opened offices in London at 28, Great Ormond Street, W.C. 1, with the expressed object "to protect authors from being exploited by 'shark' publishers who abound both in England and America and who specialise in presenting to the young and unpublished author, more by suggestion than by actual statement, a rosy picture of his chances of fame and fortune which is not justified by the facts."

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The scheme of the Harmony Press is to assist the writer to find a commercial publisher for his book, if in the opinion of an expert literary critic employed by the firm it stands a chance of publication. The addresses of likely publishers would be given him, in the event of the opinion being favourable. If it is unfavourable, a report embodying the critic's reasons will be sent to the author, and if he still desires to see himself in print, Harmony Press will have his book printed and put it on the market, charging only a modest 10 or 15 per cent. on the actual costs of production.

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We wish this gallant venture the success it deserves, and hope it will not break down under the heavy overhead charges for publicity necessitated if the vanity publisher is to be fought with his own weapons and guileless authors all over the English-speaking world are to be reached and protected.

If there are amongst our readers any writers who are in need of advice about the placing of their work, we shall be glad to help them to the best of our ability through the Literary Bureau we are establishing in connection with this ANNUAL, particulars of which will be found on another page.

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The Incorporated Society of Authors, Playwrights and Composers, which has moved its quarters to 84, Drayton Gardens, S.W. 10, safeguards the interests of its members, and authors joining the Society will obtain expert advice on business matters and legal assistance if required. This body has conducted many a campaign to expose the malpractices of fraudulent publishers. In a number of its organ, the *Author*, some correspondence is quoted between the Arden-Godbold Press, a firm carrying on business in Shaftesbury Avenue, and a poet who had refused to contribute £25 towards the cost of "publicity measures," to whom the firm wrote a letter ending as follows: "Don't bother to return the proofs of your poems, as we have already corrected them and also your grammar.

"We would sue you for the expenses we have already incurred, but all we got from the last bird of your description was a court order in our favour and all the bird's second-hand furniture, excluding the bed and blankets. Even after fumigating the furniture in question we couldn't get much of a price for it."

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As a public-spirited movement for the encouragement of literature, Authors' Week in New Zealand ought to be noted here. A correspondent from the Dominion writes: New Zealand Authors' Week was instituted in 1936. The organiser of the movement was Mr. O. N. Gillespie, who edited "New Zealand Short Stories," published by Dent's. The movement emanated from Wellington, where, naturally enough, the greatest activity was manifested. Exhibitions of books by New Zealand authors were organised in all the main centres, and lectures on the history of New Zealand literature were delivered in connection with these exhibitions. In Wellington the resources of the General Assembly Library and the Turnbull Library were placed at the disposal of the committee. The latter institution, it should be explained, was established through the beneficence of the late Mr. Turnbull, who, with the late Sir Joseph Kinzey, shared the distinction of being the Mr. Wise of New Zealand. It is sad to reflect that Sir Joseph did not survive to assist at Authors' Week. His library is now incorporated with the Turnbull Library, which is housed at the residence of the donor. Here one may study rare old books in a rare old New Zealand house. In Dunedin the principal activity of the local committee was the production of "Rose Lane," the three-act play by Miss Edith Howes which won the competition promoted by the British Drama League in England. Miss Howes was present at the performance. The booksellers co-operated with the committee, and in some instances authors were in attendance at the principal bookshops to sign copies of their works. To give but one instance, Authors' Week contributed largely to the success of "A Poor Scholar," a novel about New Zealand written in the main in New

Zealand, and printed and published locally. It was hoped to repeat Authors' Week in 1938 but the scheme was dropped. The centenary year will no doubt witness a revival of the movement.

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The New Zealand Centenary Celebrations in 1940 will be the occasion of various competitions—for the best novel, poem, etc., written by New Zealanders, which it is hoped will bring forth something to compare with the prize-winning entries in the Australian 150th Anniversary Celebrations, as the novel "Capricornia" by Xavier Herbert and the poems "Essay on Memory" by Robert D. Fitzgerald and "Druidic Gums" by T. Inglis Moore. In this connection Mr. C. R. Allen sends us the following:

"The Emigrants," by Hector Bolitho and John Mulgan, is among the firstfruits of the New Zealand Centennial Celebrations. It is concerned with literary and other contacts between New Zealand and the Old Country in days gone by. One such contact was established by Alfred Dommett, the Waring of Robert Browning's poem which opens with the line, "What's become of Waring?" Four books by a New Zealander, Frances Sim, establish another contact between Browning and New Zealand. These are "Robert Browning, the Poet and the Man," "Robert Browning, Poet and Philosopher," "Robert Browning, Mystic and Artist," and "Robert Browning and Elizabeth Barrett." Lady Sim was the wife of a judge of the Supreme Court in New Zealand. Her death closed a career as an expositor of Browning which can have no parallel in New Zealand. On at least two visits to the Old Country Lady Sim took the opportunity of visiting Browning shrines at Walworth and elsewhere. She quotes most of the accredited authorities in the course of these four books, and has some rather trenchant things to say of the monograph contributed to the "English Men of Letters" series by the late G. K. Chesterton. Lady Sim was a creative as well as an expository writer. Her volume of verse, "Fellow-travellers in New Zealand," has nothing Browningsque about it, despite her enthusiasm for the poet she has done so much to make accessible to the ordinary reader in New Zealand.

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The five literary competitions are for a novel, a short story, a full-length play, a long essay (limited to 50,000 words), a poem exceeding 100 lines and a poem less than 100 lines. The subjects are left entirely to the authors, and cash prizes are offered, ranging from £150 for the novel to £20 for the poems; there are second prizes in each section. Entries will be received by the National Historical Committee, Government Buildings, Wellington, up to noon on October 20th, 1939, from authentic New

Zealanders, a category comprising persons born and resident in New Zealand under conditions laid down by the committee.

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R. A. Burrows, of St. Catharine's College, Cambridge, was the winner of the Chancellor's Medal for English Verse this year.

At Oxford, the Newdigate Prize for 1939 was won by Kenneth Stanley Kitchin, of New College, for a poem on "Dr. Newman revisits Oxford."

The Secretary of the British Academy informs us that no award of the Rose Mary Crawshay Prize has been made this year.

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We learn from Mr. John Masefield that the announcement of the Royal Medal for Poetry will probably be made early in 1940. As the award was not made in 1938, the decision of the judges is awaited with lively curiosity.

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In view of the negative results of so many literary contests, it is cheering to note that the Hawthornden Prize awarded to Christopher Hassall for his volume of poetry, "Penthesperon," has found a worthy recipient. Entries do not have to be specially submitted for this prize, which is awarded annually to the author of what is judged to be the best piece of imaginative work in prose or verse published during the preceding twelve months by a British author under 41 years of age.

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The literary sterility of the past year has even affected the Welsh Eisteddfod. No Bard was chaired last August, and the Bardic Crown was withheld, for the first time in 43 years, on the ground that the best poem by far had strayed from the subject set. Speaking of the competition for the Bardic Chair, Dr. T. Guyon Jones, one of the judges, gave his opinion that "The 14 competitors showed ability in alliterative writing, but not one of the compositions stood out or excelled the others." Never before, in the history of National Eisteddfod, have the Crown and the Chair been withheld in the same year.

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The writing of poetry in the Welsh language is an age-long tradition, but play-writing in the Principality is an art so recently introduced that no competent dramatists in the native language have yet been brought forth by the National Eisteddfod prize, which is withheld year after year.

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The Welsh staff of the B.B.C. showed a progressive spirit by holding a course for writers and actors, in English and Welsh, at "Coleg Harlech"

from July 15th to 22nd. About 60 people attended, and amongst those present were F. W. Ogilvie (Director-General of the B.B.C.), R. Hopkins Morris (Director of the Welsh Region of the B.B.C.), J. Tudor Jones, T. Rowland Hughes, Sam Jones and Dafydd Gruffydd (members of the Welsh B.B.C. staff), Val Gielgud, Dr. Alexander, du Garde Peach and E. A. Harding, all of whom are connected with the B.B.C.

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Representatives of P.E.N. Clubs from all over the world gathered in New York in May, as guests of the World Fair. Prominent among them were Jules Romains (the International President), Ernst Toller, Arnold Zweig, Thomas Mann, Remarque, Van Loon, André Maurois, John Bojer, Stuart Cloete, Maurice Walsh, Sholem Asch, Ralph Bates, Hermon Ould, Dorothy Thompson (the American President), Bessie Beatty (Secretary). J. B. Priestley, who was unable to be present, broadcasted an address from England on "The Author's Responsibility for the Crisis of To-day and the World of To-morrow." Other topics on the agenda were: "Can Culture Survive Exile?" "The Ivory Tower (or the Soap Box—or the Place of Propaganda in Literature)," "Writing Contemporary History (Journalism)."

Turning to the lighter side of the Conference, the American hospitality was generous in the extreme. Besides excursions to various shows at the World's Fair, the representatives were entertained at White House, Washington, by President and Mrs. Roosevelt, and at a brilliant dinner and reception in honour of Jules Romains, at the Hotel Plaza.

Although held in New York, far away from the European scene, the European tragedy lay like a pall over the gathering. From beginning to end the meetings rang with the speeches of exiles lamenting the loss of country, the loss of freedom in Europe, or the fate of compatriots in prison, concentration camps, or a martyr's grave. Europe, in a word, dominated the proceedings. The Overseas Dominions and the countries of the Pacific hardly appeared on the map. They simply don't count as far as P.E.N. conferences are concerned.

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The march of events will interfere seriously with the P.E.N. World Conference arranged in Stockholm this autumn. The invitation of the Municipality of Venice to English literary societies to participate in the celebrations of the 50th anniversary of Robert Browning's death, at the Palazzo Rozenico in September, is a noble international gesture, doomed, alas, to remain no more than a gesture.

The Aborigine in Australian Literature

NO vision of the tragedy which shadowed the primitive native race, driven from its hunting grounds and the rivers where it had fished, haunted the first writers about Australia. The early history of our country reeks with the massacre of these people, and with the crimes committed against them by ruthless men who would even leave poisoned flour in their huts in order to exterminate men, women and children of the Stone Age as though they were vermin.

The natives, used as guides, enabled white settlers to cross the coastal ranges and take possession of vast pastoral plains inland, to penetrate dense forests and to explore desolate, almost waterless, country for gold. But if natives speared a few cattle, or attempted reprisals for the rape of their women, death of kinsmen, the vengeance of the settlers followed, swift and summary.

That the native had no sense of personal property did not weigh with the settlers, or the fact that strange beasts wandering on their hunting grounds might be regarded as their natural food by the natives, quite as much as the kangaroo and wallaby they had been accustomed to kill there.

Hunting "black cattle" became a sport in outlying districts where the natives were "troublesome"—otherwise resented and resisted depredations of the white man. In little more than a century and a half, wherever the white race took possession of their most fertile lands and watercourses, the natives have been swept into oblivion. Starvation, disease and the grief of being removed from earth to which they were bound by tradition and instinct completed their extinction.

It is estimated that there were 300,000 aborigines in Australia when civilisation reached the country. These figures cannot be regarded as incontestable because no census of the tribes living beyond explored territory could be taken. Nevertheless, they serve as an approximation to what the aboriginal population might have been. Today, with wider opportunities for estimates, the number of aboriginal inhabitants is reckoned as 60,000, although a half-caste population of over 20,000 has arisen. The majority, both of aborigines and half-castes, is to be found only in the tropical north and north-west of Australia.

Not all settlers dealt savagely with the natives they drove from their lands to make way for cattle and sheep. Some few professed to be able to live peaceably with the aborigines by never interfering with their women and by allowing a certain number of beasts to be killed for them, by way of compensation for depriving them of their natural game and hunting grounds. Evidence given before the first commission to enquire into native affairs, in Western Australia, produced this fact; but not many of the pioneers, opening up new country, tried conciliatory methods with old men of the tribes.

Truly it has been said that "the native races know us chiefly by our crimes." The aborigines have vanished from the south and east of Australia, where the great cities now flourish. Only in remote country districts one or two settlements still harbour a remnant of the dark people in captivity.

Thousands of Australians, born and bred in the country, have never seen an aborigine. Not so very long ago there were as many natives in Victoria, in New South Wales and in South Australia as there still are in the north-west of Western Australia, in the Northern Territory and in Queensland; but slowly and surely, as the white men penetrate and take possession of their last retreats, the pure-blooded natives are dwindling in numbers and dying out.

A generation ago the aborigines were not considered stuff of which literature is made. There could be no romance about them, Mrs. Campbell Praed, a novelist of pioneering days, has one of her heroines remark. The aborigine was regarded as an ugly and repulsive creature, the abysmal brute, without any redeeming feature.

It was not until scientists began to bewail, with the dying race, the loss of much valuable anthropological material that serious attention was devoted to it.

One of the first attempts to study the native mind, made by Mr. W. A. Howitt and Dr. Lorimer Fison in 1873, appeared in the form of papers on the system of native relationships. "Kamilaroi and Kurnai" created great interest in 1880. "From Mother Right to Father Right" and "Notes on Songs and Songmakers of Some Australian Tribes" followed. The full value of these researches, however, was not realised until the publication of "Native Tribes of South-Eastern Australia" in 1904.

The careful and scientific method of Mr. Howitt and Dr. Fison, in their first papers, revealed myths and legends, complicated social and ethical codes and customs, indicating a degree of intelligence with which the aborigines had not been previously credited.

"The Aborigines of Victoria," by Mr. R. Brough Smyth, published in 1878, "The Aborigines of Australia," by Richard Sadlier, R.N., in 1883, and "The Australian Race," by Mr. E. M. Curr, in 1886, were other books

which added to observations and theories about the aborigines that began to be discussed.

Baldwin Spencer's "Native Tribes of Central Australia" (1898), and "The Arunta," in two volumes, by Spencer and Gillen, established the claim of the aborigines to be much higher in the scale of social evolution than was originally imagined.

More recently Basedow, in "The Australian Aboriginal," confirmed and extended the experiences of Professor Baldwin Spencer by investigation of the customs and ideas of wandering tribes in the great central areas. This book, illustrated and written for popular consumption, has done much to introduce the aborigine to the sympathy and understanding of white Australia.

It has given the aborigine status in his own right as a being of romance and mystery, an adventurer from the twilight of history, our own Aryan ancestor surviving in the twentieth century. That the aborigine of Australia is related with the Veddahs and Dravidians of India, "and with the fossil men of Europe, from whom the Caucasian element has sprung," is now generally accepted. His and our "racial development was very early dissociated from the Mongoloid and Negroid lines."

Basedow states that there has been no case of a mixture of aboriginal and white blood, continuing on the white strain, showing any throw-back to a dark skin in the children of such a union.

Within the last few years various groups of anthropologists have gone on excursions along the west coast and into the wilds to study aboriginal lore and psychology. Several books have been written on the basis of these enquiries.

Interest in the aborigines has grown as a result, so that people in Australia today are almost as much concerned about the extinction of the native race as they are about the disappearance of the duckbilled platypus and koala or native bear.

Among collections of myths and legends, Mrs. Langloh Parker's "Australian Legendary Tales," published in 1898, were treasure trove.

Andrew Lang, in a preface to the collection, wrote: "Barbarians did the dreaming of the world, poetry arose in their fancies, and poetry, in spite of facts and science, resolutely refuses to 'follow darkness like a dream.' Mrs. Parker's collection demonstrates that, amongst the world's dreamers, the Australians, just escaping from the Palæolithic Age, were among the most distinguished."

There have been other collections of myths and legends, but usually they are spoilt for those who know the native way of telling a story by being too titivated, or by the dragging in of some sentiment alien to native thought and emotion.

It is difficult for a stranger to obtain authentic versions of songs and

legends. Often an aboriginal will tell a white man or woman a version thought to be pleasing. Those who know the aborigines best say they are so sensitive to facial expression that they will tell a stranger the sort of yarns most likely to please him. Only people who have been associated with old men of the tribes for years, and who have won their confidence, may be depended on to gather the most secret saga. Even then the *tabee*, or *corroboree* songs, are often in a dead language, quite different from the everyday speech of the tribe. Even the natives themselves say they do not know the meaning of separate words, although they know the significance of a chant as a whole.

David Uniapon, a full-blooded aboriginal, who has been educated, a while ago wrote some legends for publication, but unfortunately they showed more of his acquired culture than native origin.

One of the best-known and best-beloved of Australian books, "The Little Black Princess," by Mrs. Æneas Gunn, is a naïve and charming story of a little aboriginal girl being tamed to domesticity on a cattle station in the Northern Territory. It treats the natives with whimsical humour and sympathy, but leaves unsaid all that might interfere with an idyllic picture.

Some novels have been written, lately, which depict the life of the aborigines and half-castes on out-back stations; but these for the most part are concerned with the natives only in relation to their white masters. They give no inkling of conditions, cruel and oppressive in many instances, for which a callous administration of native affairs is responsible.

Ion Idriess writes of the aborigines with knowledge and assurance, but in "Over the Range" and some others of his books, it would seem that he views them chiefly from the angle of the police department.

"All About" and "Chunamah," by Mary and Elizabeth Durack, provide lively and amusing sketches of aborigines who have become family retainers and attached themselves to the semi-feudal mode of existence maintained by the more patriarchal station proprietors.

When I wrote "Coonardoo" it was to expose the plight of the aboriginal woman and the half-caste problem. These were considered forbidden subjects at the time. Everybody in the north-west knows what "black velvet" means and the implications of a half-caste population, but by general consent they have been shrouded in silence.

With the publication of "Capricornia," by Xavier Herbert, that silence has been broken for ever. This book won the Commonwealth Centenary Prize and is the outstanding novel of the year.

A grim and powerful piece of realism, it stands against romantic fiction about the aborigines, against the slavery of natives and half-castes on out-back stations, in mission settlements and in Government compounds. "Capricornia" is the first real defence the aborigines have ever had. It is stark and uncompromising in its indictment of the forces responsible

for the disgraceful and outrageous state of native affairs in the Northern Territory.

A crude and colossal fragment of the whole truth with regard to the ill-treatment, oppression and injustice suffered by the native race at the hands of white Australians, the book remains, nevertheless, a mighty gesture demanding attention.

That attention has already been accorded. There are rumours of improvements in the administration of aboriginal affairs in Capricornia; but these improvements will not be served by the herding of natives in prison compounds, as is contemplated.

Only adequate reservations of territory, and the possibility for natives and half-castes to live and obtain their means of existence in the ways natural to them, will touch the fringe of the circumstances involved. Those ways are different for full-blooded aborigines and for half-castes. The way of the aborigines is the way of the wild; the way of the half-caste that of his white brothers. This is the only solution which "Capricornia" suggests, but it is also the solution which commends itself to all Australians who realise their debt to the dispossessed and dying peoples of the native race.

KATHARINE SUSANNAH PRICHARD.

Jessie Mackay

By W. F. ALEXANDER

NEW ZEALAND poetry, it has been said, is a mild matriarchy, and though there have always been men poets of distinctiveness and force to make exceptions to the rule, the saying is broadly true. An anthology of New Zealand verse covering all periods, by whomever compiled in the last twenty years, would have required more extracts from Jessie Mackay than from any other singer, and a chieftainess the chieftainess succeeds. Jessie Mackay, who died last August in her seventy-fourth year, was born on the Rakaia uplands and passed her early years on a South Canterbury sheep station, of which her father was manager. It was a lonely, but romantically attractive and far from inhospitable environment. Her father and mother were both Highlanders, and her mind was steeped in the Scottish ballads and all the other Scottish literature. She became a teacher, then a journalist, in Christchurch, and throughout her life contributed to numerous journals. Her second book of verse, published as long ago as 1891, contained all the styles that followed it—the ballads (based on the Border minstrelsy that was part of her being), the Maori legends (which nobody has done better), descriptive verses and those of pure fantasy. Other slim volumes followed till her place was established with “Land of the Morning” in 1910, as the most outstanding, if not of New Zealand poets, quite certainly of the native-born. And some of her best lyrics, of the purest singing quality, appeared in her last booklet, “Vigil,” only three years before her death.

She was the Highland singer, the Highland seer, but the boundaries of her spiritual homeland were extended, so to speak, till the country of her birth became one with it, and she sang of “the running rings of fire on the Canterbury hills,” or

“Land of the morning, Kiwa’s golden daughter,
Land of the fleet-foot mist and singing water,”

alternately with Appin and Strathnaver. An address presented to her on her seventieth birthday, bearing more than 300 signatures from New Zealand, Australia and Great Britain, did not exaggerate in saying, “You have united an old tradition with a new loyalty, and blended without loss the

heritage of one land with the ideals and aspirations of another." Her passionate sympathies were with all the oppressed—the Armenians, Serbians, small birds in cages—and for causes which she associated with progress or justice she worked with more than her pen. No one else in New Zealand leaps to a poem like Jessie Mackay; "Light is good for the living, long light for the lover!" "Here's to the home that was never, never ours;" "By Odin, Yea! I saw the black horses!" "I am sheen and motion," she made her sea exclaim, and the words might have described her poetry. Though the lyric note was her strongest gift and she was a romantic to the heart's core, the thrice-tempered point with which she often drove home a poem, consolidating its argument in some terse imaginative phrase, could be as hard as a diamond. Lyricism with her meant no lack of "fundamental brain-stuff." In her personal life a shyness that could seem extreme covered a deep humour and a capacity for shrewd retort which her quietness made more effective, and the grim Scotch humour can be found, occasionally, in her poetry. She wrote fine prose as well as verse, and much of her work in both kinds, scattered over a large number of journals, remains to be collected and republished.

Song of the Drift Weed

HERE'S to the home that was never, never ours!
Toast it full and fairly when the winter lowers.
Speak ye low, my merry men, sitting at your ease;
Hearken to the homeless Drift in the roaring seas!

Here's to the life we shall never live on earth!
Cut for us awry, awry ages ere the birth.
Set the teeth and meet it well, wind upon the shore;
Like a lion, in the face look the Nevermore!

Here's to the love we were never let to win!
What of that? a many shells have a pearl within;
Some are mated with the gold in the light of day;
Some are buried fathoms deep, in the seas away.

Here's to the selves we shall never, never be!
We're the drift of the world and the tangle of the sea.
It's far beyond the Pleiad, it's out beyond the sun
Where the rootless shall be rooted when the wander-year is done!
JESSIE MACKAY.

Morning Glory

THE HEART OF THE YOUNG MAN

[The line, "I will wash my hands in the morning glory," is quoted in one of Max Muller's books as the refrain of a slave hymn from America.]

I WILL wash my hands in the morning glory,
All on the bridge of the colours seven!
I will dress my hair with the darts of morning
On the level rose at the gate of heaven!

Red and ringed is the spur of morning :
Far and fast are the horses champing :
I will ride on the first and foremost;
Hear how the beaten winds are ramping !

Hark away on the whirling æons !
Hark away with the Nimrods olden !
Bathed as a babe in the morning glory,
Lo, myself ! I ride, beholden !

If love there be on hills of the highest,
Love with the left hand lightly gather :
Wed is the right to Power diviner,
Red is the gift of the Ancient Father.

I will wash my hands in the morning glory
All on the Bridge of the Living Fire :
High is the mark of the Sun God's hunting,
But the heart of a young man, higher, higher !
JESSIE MACKAY.

The Lonely Faring

O MY dear, my dear !
If we were talking,
If we were walking
The old, old ways by the wizard stone !
But it's one comes only;
'Tis I go lonely,
Walking and talking with myself alone !

O my dear, my dear !
I see with your eyes,
I hear as it flies
Your song go round by the old hearth stone !
But you come never
By loch or by river;
Far out I am faring alone, alone !

JESSIE MACKAY.

Making

GOD made the greenwood; man makes cages.
Man makes monarchs : God makes sages.
Man made God in his image of clay,
With a dark-fair face like night and day.

God made man of fire and dross
By the Rivers Four in the crook of a cross.
God made the lift and the blue hill's bloom;
Man made a crypt for the love of gloom.

God made the waters, rayed and rippled;
Man made the weir and the trap that crippled.
God made the greenwood : man makes cages.
When Man is made the last star ages.

JESSIE MACKAY.

E. Mary Gurney

WHO shall say to what heights Elizabeth Mary Gurney might have risen had death not so cruelly claimed her at the age of thirty-eight? By then she had earned an enviable reputation as a short-story writer; there has never been another in New Zealand to write so freely and so well, and a year after her death she remains the only short-story writer who really counts in Dominion literature.

I received the news of E. Mary Gurney's death in May, 1938, with that terrible sense of loss which can come only when one has lost a friend who cannot be replaced. Yet, great as was that sense of loss, it was perhaps less acute than a feeling of resentment that she had to die so young. If ever anyone enjoyed life E. Mary Gurney did: she enjoyed it to the full with a grand and glorious simplicity. Her demands were few: she wanted only to be with horses and to write, but horses mattered most.

Her stories were original, virile, nearly always carrying with them the tang of the open. Her sense of balance and of drama were strong, never failed her. She contributed to almost every Australian and New Zealand publication, and to many in England. She always "threatened" to settle down and write seriously, but never did. Even the stimulus of winning valuable story contests could not drag her from the outdoors to her typewriter. Despite the praise which her writings earned, she was not satisfied. In June, 1934, she wrote to me, "I am under no illusion about my work. It is mediocre, with a certain amount of style and character drawing, but on the whole it is rocky in construction and weak in plot, nor does it improve signally." Her own criticism was brutally harsh, uncalled for, but it gave her an incentive to do greater things—and all who watched her career hoped for those greater things which they knew lay within her.

She wrote two novels, one of which I was privileged to read in MS. form. It was sent to a publisher, but it came back with the advice to try elsewhere. "I will some day," she wrote, but that "some day" never came. The novel was good, worthy of publication, but it did not reveal the E. Mary Gurney of the short stories. I think, like many another short-story writer, she found the wider scope of the novel hard to negotiate.

If she had loved writing as she loved horses she must have reached the

pinnacle of fame, but to her writing was merely a means of making money whereby she could live and be with horses.

One often hears it said of the dead that he or she would have chosen the death that befell had there been a choice, and it seems to me that E. Mary Gurney would have elected to die in some manner as she did—among horses. Her end was sudden: it was a horse—and let it be repeated that she loved horses—that killed her when it kicked out unexpectedly. She did not die by the machinery or the contrivings of man. Which was as well, because for man and his works she had little regard.

E. Mary Gurney wrote verse also. But I am limited in my space, and will content myself by saying only that she considered her poetry futile, just another means of making money. Perhaps it was not in the class of her short stories, but she always had a message, and her verse could be understood. It was always better than she allowed.

Let these lines from her poem "Fear" be her epitaph:

"It is not Death I fear so much"—
 But the last passing by
 Of sight and sound and scent and touch;
 Of earth and sun and sky,
 Of all the quiet and glowing things
 That bring me such delight—
 To pass me by on sable wings,
 Into the silent night.

C. H. FORTUNE.

Pizarro

I THINK that when you bent, in agony, to kiss
The cross you traced in your own blood,
You called on God;
Saw gold—
And Ataulpha's face.

Not ever shall you see the Face of God,
Nor rest beneath the Shadow of His Cross.
The cross you traced upon the darkening floor
Casteth no shadow,
Now—
Or ever more.

The Way of Love

I N a grove,
By a stream,
I met Love.
We did dream

'Neath the willows
In the spring.
Green our pillows.
We did sing

Love's old song.
Now round his bed
Grass grows long.
For his head

Wreaths of willow—
(Poor dead love!)
Earth his pillow
In the grove!

E. MARY GURNEY.

(With acknowledgements to *The New Zealand Mercury*.)

Two New Zealand Writers

J. A. LEE, NOVELIST AND REFORMER

ISHMAEL IS COMFORTED

THE materials for this sketch are meagre. One recalls a visit to the House of Representatives in the days when Henry Holland still led the Labour Party as Leader of the Opposition. On that occasion the Government was subjected to an attack on the grounds that it had lengthened the life of Parliament. Two of the critics made an impression that still lingers. One was a buffoon, the other a comedian. With the buffoon we are not concerned, but the comedian is the subject of this very circumscribed consideration. He was the member for Grey Lynn. Of his personal appearance it is not granted me to write. I can only go by hearsay. He was a worthy foe, trenchant and witty, with an acrid tang to his wit. One said to oneself, "We have not heard the last of Mr. J. A. Lee." Then came rumours of a novel that had appeared anonymously. The scene was set in Dunedin, a town one had good reason to know since it was in Dunedin that consciousness first dawned on one, and it was to Dunedin that the mind had so often reverted when life threatened to submerge one. . . . From the shelter of a home set in a comparatively ample garden one had begun a series of sorties under the tutelage of nurses and governesses. It was possible in those days in Dunedin to lead a life not dissimilar to the life led by children in Bayswater or Kensington. At least it was possible for us, and the illusion was fortified by a "nanny" who, in the retrospect, seems to have been 100 per cent. English. We were admonished not to do or say this or that because it was "Colonial." In brief, one was not one of "The Children of the Poor." For that very reason the children of the poor exercised a peculiar fascination over one. As time went on one shed the restraining bands of privilege. One found oneself at a State school where one ingratiated oneself with gifts of apples plucked from the orchard of the comparatively ample garden. Then Dunedin became the home town to which one's thoughts turned with tender wistfulness during terms of duress at a boarding-school in the North Island. The old house—and it was old as houses went in Dunedin—awaited the return of Ulysses, and, to quote Matthew Arnold,

showed a line of festal light when Ulysses came back by the express from the north. All this time life went on in Dunedin, life of which one caught but fleeting glimpses. Symbolic of such life were certain scenes which linger in the memory by reason, perhaps, of the back-cloth which Nature had painted for the occasion. Such a back-cloth was one against which a group of men and lads are holding greyhounds in leash. The grass of the hillside looks almost green in this garish light. The scene might have come out of our Landseer picture-book. Another scene is backed by a sanguinary sunset. It sheds its influence over a patch of waste land by the water of Leith. This Aceldama is now built over with trim villas, but in those days it was a venue for the settling of differences. The two protagonists in the fight have stripped to their shirts and breeches. They are boys of one's own age, or perhaps they are a year or two older. A spectral bluegum seems to be somewhere in attendance, but details of the picture are vague. Only its essence remains. That was a scene from which one hurried to the sanctuary of the parental garden. Countless pictures, some Hogarthian, some Turner-esque, of the Dunedin on the other side of that sanctuary, linger in the mind. "Children of the Poor" was written on the alien side of that fortalice. It presented Dunedin as it must have appeared to one of those gamins whom one propitiated with apples, or from whom one fled by friendly tracks. It was a drab picture relieved by flashes of beauty such as are vouchsafed only to one who feels that his hand is against every man and every man's hand is against him. Oscar Wilde once said that one should not enjoy one's sunsets as if one had not paid for them. One feels that Albany Porcello paid for his sunsets with his own pelt. There are passages in "Children of the Poor" which almost persuade one to envy the writer despite his Ishmaeldom. In due course one was told that the novel had been written by the man who had twitted the Government with lengthening the life of Parliament in the cause of self-preservation. With John A. Lee's politics we are not here concerned. We are concerned with his contribution to New Zealand literature. Of "Civilian into Soldier," his third novel, one cannot write. "The Hunted" came to the present writer from the hands of Robin Hyde. She had an advance copy with her when she visited Dunedin some years ago, and she left it with me. It will not be claimed for "The Hunted" that it is as good a book as "Children of the Poor." It is in parts flageolistic to the point of nausea. Still, there are passages which recall the best in Mr. Lee's first novel; notably those which are concerned with Albany's experiences between escape and recapture. One hesitates to subscribe to the tenet that all great literature must spring from suffering. It is true, however, that most of it must spring from actuality, which some would have is one and the same thing.

One is, or should be, glad to salute genius in whatever quarter, welcome or unwelcome, it manifests itself. It is my impression that something of

genius went to the writing of "Children of the Poor." Read in one way the book may appear merely as an appeal to sadistic instincts, but to read it thus would be to miss something else that pervades it. If you would press me for a more definite indication of what that something is I would suggest that you read the passage describing a hawking enterprise with his uncle by Albany Porcello on the Taeiri Plains, or a description of how he waded up the Water of Leith one day. This latter recalls young John Ridd in the early chapters of "Lorna Doone." There is something of an enduring nature in such passages. Whether or not the elation of life is best celebrated against a background of ignominy and suffering is a moot point. Kenneth Grahame in "Dream Days" and "The Golden Age" communicated charm without any attendant spectre more menacing than the aunts. What is incontestable is the universal appeal to life interpreted, in the retrospect or at the moment, by a sensitised child mind. Such a mind was that of Albany Porcello, Ishmael. The sentimentalist might advance the theory that his genius appeals because of his outlawry. A saner view, perhaps, is that his genius appeals in spite of it.

IRIS WILKINSON, WAR CORRESPONDENT

When Iris Wilkinson was staying in Dunedin some years ago she declared her intention of finding her way to the Old Country by some means or other. One wondered, as she limped along the streets of this town, in which she seemed to find something pleasantly Cranfordian, how she would ever compass such a transmigration. She seemed so susceptible to the jars and nerve-wracks of the world. She had established for herself an abiding-place at Mount Albert in Auckland, and there, one would have thought, she might have cultivated her muse in comparative quietude, with Gloria Rawlinson for friend and neighbour. It is doubtful whether the average New Zealander, if he has heard of her at all, has ceased to think of Gloria Rawlinson as anything other than the wonder-child who spun fairy poems to the edification of Dame Sybil Thorndike and other distinguished visitors. Iris Wilkinson, or Robin Hyde, as one prefers to think of her, knew better. She wrote a foreword for "The Perfume Vendor," which represents, if not the firstfruits of Gloria Rawlinson's genius, at least her first charter for consideration as something other than a Daisy Ashford in verse.

Iris Wilkinson comes of South African stock. She has something of the intensity and bitterness of Olive Schreiner, of her power to crystallise a scene into something haunting and memorable. From force of circumstance her work has been uneven. She has been compelled to write partially for a public that likes its alliterative captions. "Journalese," the first

book of its kind, so far as I know, to have been written in New Zealand about the froth that manifests itself on the surface of national life, is shot through and through with the idiom of the newspaper for which Iris Wilkinson was writing at the time of the book's appearing. It is a book of gossip, of life observed by a journalist after copy, who must needs present her stuff hot and strong. It is concerned with the vagaries of visiting artists to New Zealand, of the death struggle between two newspapers, of spiritualism exploited in the various centres, of the writer's own participation in sundry political dust-ups. As a commentary on the social life of the Dominion it has a value of its own, though it stands quite apart from the work of that other Robin Hyde, the literary craftswoman. Her first collection of verse, published locally, was "The Desolate Star." To anyone who had followed the course of poetry in New Zealand this little book of Robin Hyde came with a new note, or, to express oneself more cogently, with a new colour. Somehow one had associated New Zealand verse, rightly or wrongly, with the Adam Lindsay Gordon lilt. Here was a writer who, despite her Antipodean environment, made one think of a Chelsea evening in autumn. There were finely wrought phrases in these poems. She wrote of the English trees in a way that made one ashamed of one's own inability to apprehend them when one had the opportunity. In this poem we have in essence what Henry James expressed in his long short story about the American who found his way to Oxford, what Kipling expressed in "Habitation Enforced." Later there appeared "The Conqueror" and other poems published by Messrs. Macmillan in their "Contemporary Poets" series. Like two other women writers in New Zealand, Jessie Mackay and Edith Hodgkinson, Robin Hyde was attracted by the prodigy of the Everest expeditions. There is not space to particularise about the other poems in this collection. The habit of mind induced by writing for the sensational press sometimes betrays Robin Hyde into a flamboyant phrase, but to counterbalance such there is much fine-wrought work. Robin Hyde reads to some purpose. The same may be said of Gloria Rawlinson as she reveals herself in later work. How far this is due to an intellectual intimacy which exists between these two unusual writers one cannot say. Now Iris Wilkinson has gone off to the wars on a donkey. She has prepared herself for a magnum opus by the writing of "Passport to Hell," in which she drew from the life a wild man who is still alive, and "Check to your King," in which she drew from actuality as it is recorded in the story of Baron De Thierry, who once called himself king of a portion of New Zealand. "Wednesday's Children," a novel of hers recently published, would seem to indicate a somewhat perverse mood of experimentation. She will do better than this. When she was in Dunedin, Iris Wilkinson haunted the museum, especially the Hocken Wing. Perhaps some day it will be recorded how she was accommodated in a corner, as Katherine

Mansfield was accommodated in one of those bays in the General Assembly Library, Wellington. She has it in her to write something that will make her name as memorable in New Zealand as Katherine Mansfield's is today. It will be something utterly different from "The Garden Party" or "Bliss." She has, by the practice of the journalistic art, forged for herself shackles of which she may rid herself with difficulty. What she has is just that which sets her apart from so many who are still solicitously regarding the weather-vane of contemporary taste. Robin Hyde has gone ahead for better or worse. Her poems to be found in "Verse Alive," a collection emanating from the Caxton Press in Christchurch, "gets there," to use a vulgar phrase, while any attempts in a similar genre by other bitter young men and women merely irritate one with a sense of effort. One is glad to learn that Iris Wilkinson is safe, though tired. It is tolerably certain that her genius may have little mercy on her worn frame. Writing for her must be a necessity, and out of that necessity will come, it is reasonable to expect, that which will contribute to the enrichment of minds less charged with the sorrowful great gift.

C. R. ALLEN.

Contemporary Afrikaans Literature

BY C. M. VAN DEN HEEVER

(Professor of Afrikaans, University of the Witwatersrand,
Johannesburg.)

VERY many readers beyond the boundaries of South Africa have only the remotest and haziest conceptions of Afrikaans, the language and its literature. They know, however, that the Dutch colonised the Cape of Good Hope for nearly two centuries and that British interest in South Africa became active since the year 1806, when Britain took possession of the Cape Colony.

But what became of the Dutch spoken by the first colonists? For at present one hears only of Afrikaans as being the language spoken by over 60 per cent. of the white population of South Africa.

Gradually, but with determination, the origin and growth of this young and virile language is being drawn out of the atmosphere of misconception and misrepresentation with which it has been enveloped by chessboard politicians and impetuous press correspondents, the latter with their time-worn attacks on "this patois," "dialect" or "debased Dutch," and their accompanying ignorance of the most elementary principles affecting the general development of a language.

A service was rendered to Afrikaans by Professor T. J. Haarhoff, of the University of the Witwatersrand, when, some years ago, he gave two lectures at the University of Oxford, pointing out that Afrikaans is Dutch adapted to the new environment, paying due regard to the circumstantial influences, such as the absorption of the French Huguenots into the Dutch colony, and the language of the Malay slaves. The ruling factor, however, was undoubtedly the isolated geographical position of the country.

The delusion still persists amongst laymen that when a language sheds some of its noun and verb endings and seeks compensation for the resulting loss in a different structure of the sentence, this language is undergoing a process of "debasement."

Even in Holland many conservative people, intent on waging hair-splitting battles as to the paramount importance of a conservative spelling, have never fully grasped the portent of the change which Dutch has undergone in South Africa, and some of them brightly hope that Afrikaans will ultimately be grammatically "improved" to such an extent that some day it will be "High Dutch" again!

Experience has taught the futility of attempting to argue with the layman about language and language development. Such discussion inevitably culminates in irrelevant unscientific argument. A case in point is that of the sturdy old Calvinist farmer who would not hear of a translation of the Bible into Afrikaans, stubbornly maintaining that if High Dutch was good enough for Moses it would also be good enough for him!

Afrikaans has at length arrived at the stage where writers can settle down to solid work without being continually drawn into propagandist campaigns for its "recognition" as an independent language. In the earlier stages, and before Afrikaans gained recognition as one of the official languages of South Africa, much of the literature produced in this young language was, directly or indirectly, devoted to propaganda. During the last thirty years, however, a literature has come into being which has surprised even sceptical critics of the new language. The Afrikaans writer today has the advantage that his instrument for expression is young and plastic, and crowded with original and picturesque metaphor. As may well be expected, there was at first much instability in Afrikaans spelling, but the language has been gradually moulded into form, and Afrikaans newspapers and periodicals have contributed largely towards adapting it to new spheres.

What immediately strikes the reader who seeks a comparison between European literature and Afrikaans is the "newness," the vigour and honest simplicity which characterise the latter language. There may be lacking the wider, inner experience of the modern writer of Western Europe, but the Afrikaans writer has certainly the advantage of a wide, practically unexplored field of artistic expression. The poetry of the first real Afrikaans poets, Eugène Marais, Jan F. E. Cilliers, Totius (pseudonym for Dr. J. D. du Toit) and C. Louis Leipoldt, bear testimony to this, to the joyous vigour of a language racy of the soil and treble dear to their hearts because it was a language fought free from overwhelming odds. Apart from the originality of language symbolism and metaphor, the themes and tone of their poems are mostly sombre, giving expression to the melancholy in the hearts of their people after the Anglo-Boer War. A significance of this post-war period was that, under the stress of their emotion, the beauty and loneliness of the South African veld seemed to be "discovered" for the first time, and where commonplace attempts had been made before to portray the grandeur of South African landscape, the poets mentioned wrote verses in which the peculiar nature of the country, with which generations of Afrikaners had been intimately familiar, sang its inmost being, its inner existence, lonely, vast, but ever alluring under the silent canopy of Southern stars or with its wide vistas of blue mountains under a cloudless and brilliant sky.

Jan Cilliers' *Die Vlakte*, reminiscent of Shelley's poem *The Cloud*, was

immediately recognised and appreciated as a true work of art. Totius wrote in a mournful strain, utilising outward symbols from nature to reveal his deepest religious feelings, while Leipoldt was bitterly, intensely emotional in *Oom Gert Vertel*, a simple but stirring tale of suffering during the war. In later volumes he reveals the spirit of the true romantic, loving the beauty of nature with passionate surrender, but with ever the painful realisation that everything is fleeting and futile, and that catastrophe is never far away. Some of his poems describe with delirious joy the wonders of the veld, but then his mood suddenly and unexpectedly changes to deepest despondency, even to bitter irony.

Eugène Marais, who wrote a masterpiece in prose entitled *The Soul of the White Ant* (translated into various languages), resembles Leipoldt in some respects, but his verse is more subtle; a man whose tragic life is not fully reflected in his one small volume of remarkable poetry. He was no artist in search for themes. His whole life was, through his melancholy and passionate temperament, his love for the desert, away from mankind, and through his brilliant scientific powers of observation combined with an extreme sensitivity of nerves, a moving drama of which we obtain an occasional glimpse in his poetry. Before his death he wrote a poem, leaping like a flame from his sorely tried life and revealing what he had suffered without anyone knowing how he had yearned through the years for the deep, calm waters of death. Surely a fine example of a man who was a poet in his deepest being but for whom life with its problems was more than artistic expression in an incessant stream of verse. Both Leipoldt and Marais are poets of the first rank; they have both gained appreciative recognition in Holland.

After the post-war group of poets, who afterwards turned their attention to personal rather than to national themes, came a few poets, apart from the lovable A. G. Visser, who were keenly alive to the particular problems of the younger generation, problems of religion and individualism: a reflex, if you will, of the European upheaval bringing about the overthrow of orthodox methods and "antiquated" technique. Belonging to this group was Toon van den Heever (now a judge of the Supreme Court in the Orange Free State), an outstanding personality. He published only one volume of poetry, amplifying the same in its second edition under the title of *Eugène en Ander Gedigte*. His is a penetrating intellect, reminding one of Robert Browning. Many of these poems are of an originality both of thought and expression, which have never been surpassed by any other Afrikaans poet.

After a lull of some years there happened, after 1930, a new adventure in the realm of poetry. T. J. Haarhoff, I. D. du Plessis, W. E. G. Louw, N. P. van Wyk Louw, Uys Krige, Elizabeth Eybers and others have carried the purely individualistic tendency further and have devoted much atten-

tion to the studied use of words, to a more refined poetic diction towards the shaping of which the Dutch poets of Holland after 1914 have largely contributed.

Afrikaans prose began after the Anglo-Boer War with the ordinary commonplace novel, in which the typically nineteenth-century pattern of the old-fashioned triangle—the hero, the heroine and the villain—constantly recurs. It was an amusing sign of the times that in the South African novel of those days, when written in English, the mean, deceitful, murderous villain would be—an Afrikaner; when written in Afrikaans, the blackguard would be equally certain to bear an English name! The novels of J. H. H. de Waal, with their poor Afrikaans bearing unmistakably the influence of the English language, are examples of the old type of novel. Gradually a change was brought about because the Afrikaner, as the Hollander, has a fine sense of realism for the types of everyday life finely etched with that intense accuracy which has served to render the great Dutch painters of the seventeenth century immortal.

After 1920, and more especially as a result of the influence of Jochem van Bruggen's powerful novel *Ampie* (a study of a poor-white), rapid strides were made in developing close and accurate study of environment and character types produced by South African conditions. Mikro wrote brilliant novels and short stories on the life of the *Coloured People*. His *Toiings*, *Pelgrims* and *Rou Rieme* rank amongst the best produced in Afrikaans prose.

Abr. H. Jonker wrote painstakingly about the farmer who is ousted in his struggle against drought on the one hand and a peculiar inferiority complex on the other (*Die Plaasverdeling*, *Die Trekboer*).

D. F. Malherbe shows different angles of life in South Africa in his novels, *Die Meulenaar*, *Hans-die-Skipper*, *Saul die Worstelheld*, while Van Bruggen proceeded to sketch a series of lovable underdogs in his attractively humorous style.

The short story, too, has not been neglected. It is, in fact, a genre which has proved exceedingly popular in South Africa. A selection of Afrikaans short stories translated into English would provide an illuminating insight into the character of the people.

An Afrikaans writer who was well loved by the people was the late C. J. Langenhoven, a very prolific writer, who had one aim in view—namely, to induce the laggard to read and to love his own language.

Excellent prose has been written by Sangiro (A. A. Pienaar). His *Uit Oerwoud en Vlakte* has already been translated into English, an honour which might with equally good results be accorded to *Kees van die Kalahari*, another beautiful study of wild life, and written in Afrikaans by two English-speaking South Africans, the brothers Hobson. Within the last few years one may trace a marked tendency in Afrikaans prose to draw its

subject-matter from life in the city in contrast to the earlier concentration upon country life. The Afrikaans reader hails the change as welcome, for he has begun to weary of the many clever "portrait studies" of the poor-white, the weakling, the pathetic Jack-of-all-trades. Many writers, more especially the women, have tackled the problem of the Afrikaner's adaptation to city conditions. As yet very few novels of any importance have been written on this subject, for the regional novel, in which stress is laid on the typical, the clearly defined characteristics of farm life, will always find many good writers; but unusual talent is needed to raise the typical to a universal level through profound knowledge of human character and through a style which is personal and has at the same time all the universal qualities which transcend time and space. The same may be said of the novel treating of city life, because here the writer has at once to compete with the best from older countries when a more or less cosmopolitan mentality and mode of living is described.

The Afrikaans drama is unfortunately still lagging behind. Much of what has been published is not even third-rate. Perhaps the Afrikaans drama has to struggle more acutely than English drama for existence against the film. So far it has been a losing battle. Two writers, Grosskopf and Fagan (now a Cabinet Minister), have written dramas which may be mentioned here.

Afrikaans critics, amongst whom are F. E. J. Malherbe, P. C. Schoonees and G. Dekker, have done much to improve literary taste, sometimes under trying circumstances, for in any young literature there is always the tendency to regard the critic as an unnecessary evil, an unproductive spoilsport who could only warrant his existence by giving praise!

The fact that much honest, relentless criticism has been written within the last few years, exposing what is shallow, second-rate and propagandistic, augurs well for the future of Afrikaans literature.

Watson Kirkconnell of Winnipeg

A TWENTIETH-CENTURY WRITER OF PROSE AND VERSE

BY MARJORIE PEARMAN

AMONGST the many interesting developments in Canadian literature during the present century, the work of Watson Kirkconnell is worth more than a casual examination, and has in fact become known internationally. From its very nature it has attracted special attention in lands where English is not the mother-tongue, but that in no way detracts from his valuable service as an Empire-builder of post-war days. Such significant writing merits recognition in the world of literature. It is the purpose of this short article not to give a detailed study of this author's work, but to give readers in other parts of the British Commonwealth some idea of who he is and what he has done.

Professor Kirkconnell, for it is by that title that he is best known in Winnipeg, is Professor of Classics in United College, one of the denominational colleges affiliated to the University of Manitoba, and older than the University itself. He describes himself as "a Scotch-Canadian of the fourth generation," and is the son of the late Thomas Allison Kirkconnell, formerly headmaster of a school in Lindsay, Ontario. The Professor's biography of his father ("A Canadian Headmaster," Clarke, Irwin Co., Toronto) is one of his finest pieces of work and is full of reminiscences of home life at Port Hope and Lindsay. (He was born at Port Hope in 1895.) This book gives us not only a picture of the scholarly background which was largely responsible for the writer's own literary development, but also aspects of national life that are frequently ignored by those who prefer to portray Canada as the very "wild and woolly" west.

The man whose writings are both significant and interesting is well known in Winnipeg not only in University circles but also in other groups. He is prominent as a member of the Baptist Church, not only in the West, but also in other parts of Canada, and he is also closely associated with the Canadian Institute of International Affairs, the Canadian Authors' Association, the Winnipeg Poetry Society and several other groups. As a public lecturer, Professor Kirkconnell is greatly in demand, not only because of his sound scholarship and extensive travel, but also because of his reliability in keeping appointments and his willingness to oblige small groups as well

as large ones. Only those who know him well can realise what that service involves for one who has both a heavy University programme and an amazing amount of writing to occupy his time. There must be much burning of midnight oil before the weekly round is ended, but the Kirkconnell family is complete when church time arrives on Sunday.

By this time readers must be curious to learn something of the work which has made Watson Kirkconnell known, not only throughout the North American Continent, but also in many of the countries of Central and Northern Europe. It would be impossible to deal with every phase in a short article, but his outstanding literary activities are serious prose, original verse and verse translations of poems from many languages. Of these three groups I propose to deal summarily with both the prose and the original verse, not because of their lack of value, but because of the unique character of the third group. The prose includes the biography of his father, already mentioned, unusually good introductions and biographical notes in connection with his numerous collections of verse translation, as well as several books and numerous articles on the racial heritage and national problems of the nations of Central Europe, many of whom have sent large numbers of immigrants to Canada. One could write a whole book on these extensive writings alone.

From the point of view of service to the Empire in general, and to Canada in particular, Watson Kirkconnell's verse translation from the poems of many races is undoubtedly his most significant work. Since 1918, and even before, Canada has become the home of hundreds of immigrants from the non-English-speaking countries of Europe. These people have come from the northern lands of Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Iceland; they have streamed in from Ruthenia and the Ukraine, from Poland, from Hungary, from Czecho-Slovakia and from Greece. In fact, there have been bands of new arrivals from practically every country in Europe, and their advent has necessarily created many problems. Language difficulties have led to awkward situations based on mutual lack of understanding and ignorance of other men's ways. Many hard things have been said and thoughtless acts have sometimes fostered racial antagonism. Fortunately for Canada, Watson Kirkconnell, and other men like him, had vision enough to realise that the newcomers, most of them, came to seek peace in a new land, and that despite their lack of material possessions, they came not empty-handed. From every part of Europe they brought with them customs, costumes, handicrafts, and even literature, which are an asset to the Canadian heritage. In a land where English is normally spoken in all schools and British traditions are cherished by the majority, there is no fear that the newcomers will make an undesirable contribution to national life, but there have been times when it was necessary to state that fact. In his preface to "Canadian Overtones," Watson Kirkconnell says clearly,

"What we sorely need is enough common intelligence to recognise both the rich diversity of racial gifts on this earth and the strength which racial roots can contribute to the individual." This volume of poems contains translations of Canadian poetry written originally in Swedish, Norwegian, Italian, Greek and Ukrainian. English-speaking people cannot but be moved by the sad note of many of these poems which came straight from the heart of pioneers who toiled in a land where theirs was an alien tongue. An Icelandic pioneer who came to Canada in 1889 wrote verses which are vividly rendered by their translator:

"I never knew what Dearth's grim hand
To starving mortals meant
Until from out my native land
It gave me banishment.

With half my life-time thrown away,
In exile I must toil,
And rest, when ends my human day,
In this cold alien soil."

It is good to see that the daughter who left Iceland with him as a child of six was later able to write:

"With far prophetic vision, the faithful pioneers
Beheld the peace and plenty that are yours;
And gladly they remember with the lapsing of the years
Devotion to a work that still endures."

As we turn the pages of "Canadian Overtones" we note with interest the different types of poetry produced by divers racial groups. Watson Kirkconnell aims not at literal translation but at catching the spirit of a poem, and then reproducing as faithfully as possible both its spirit and its metre. Here is a poem from Ukrainian-Canadian verse:

THE MODEL SON

"A gossip boasted to his friend
The virtues of his son:
'He doesn't smoke or take a drink,
Or tease the girls for fun.'

'How old is this best lad alive?'
The friend in wonder cried.
'The best of sons is just turned five,'
The beaming sire replied."

Those of us who have listened to gay Ukrainian singers and watched their merry dances are not surprised to find a poem like this among the more serious ones that portray the sorrows of an immigrant.

Other collections contain translations from Czech, Finnish, Latin,

Italian and Roumanian poems. Even more significant than the actual verses are Watson Kirkconnell's prefaces and biographical notes. In these we see quite clearly the writer's vision of a happier future when each child of Canada shall have made its contribution to the race that is even yet in the throes of birth. His vision is not that of a melting-pot into which all are ruthlessly thrust, to be moulded eventually into a uniform national pattern; it is a vision such as that of the master craftsmen of Europe in the days when every man made a contribution of his own designing towards the massive beauty of the great cathedrals such as Amiens and Rheims. English-speaking people are playing their part in the building of the edifice, but they are also learning the ways of other races. At gatherings in Winnipeg it is often possible to talk in English with individuals who were born in a dozen different lands and originally spoke a dozen different tongues. As we discuss customs and costumes, songs and dances, history and handicrafts, we are drawn closer together by bonds of sympathy and friendship that will form firm foundations for our race and find expression in our literature.

By his untiring interest in the literary activities of the numerous racial groups, Watson Kirkconnell has won honours from learned societies all over the American Continent, as well as in Iceland, Poland and Hungary. His biography has been awarded the medal of the French Historic Institute and he has made friends in many lands. His own knowledge of Latin, Greek, French and German formed a starting-point for his work in translation; later he acquired a reading knowledge of other languages, and he has never hesitated to have his findings checked by experts before he finally wrote his translation. The work of this Canadian writer in his particular field is unique, but it is surpassed by the significance of his effort to promote understanding between the numerous races that are playing their part in the building of the still very young Canadian nation.

The Indian Parnassus

By V. N. BHUSHAN

(Professor of English, Wadia College, Poona, India)

THE title shall stand because I like it; but it is rather vague, I know, and does not indicate the exact scope of this essay. The Indian Parnassus, as I understand it, has many aspects. I propose to deal at present with only one of them—namely, verse written in English by Indian writers. With the Editor's "maximum of two thousand words" confronting me, I am compelled to be brief, and shall therefore state in a meagre manner a few facts connected with the topic.

Barring the "mute inglorious Miltons" and those "born to blush unseen," there are in India, at present, quite a large number of individuals who are using the English language as the medium of their poetic expression. If I were writing a thesis and not a short article like this I could, I am sure, compile a list of the names of Indian poets and their publications which would in itself be a chapter of considerable dimensions. This rather "extensive activity" has mostly been of recent growth—just a quarter of a century old. And these several votaries at the shrine of the English Muse are an amorphous body. They come from all ranks and conditions of life—students, professors, lawyers, business men, educationists, civilians, administrators. The ties that superficially bind them into a homogeneous entity are—the English language used and the fond desire to make themselves audible to a world wider than their own linguistic and geographical area.

"From low beginnings, we date our winnings." Verse in English by Indian writers is roughly not more than a century old. The casual references to India in the poetry of English writers like Chaucer, Spenser, Sidney, Marlowe, Shakespeare, Milton, Dryden, Pope, Southey, Moore, Shelley, Scott, Tennyson and others; the famous minute of Macaulay and the resolution of Lord Bentinck introducing English into our educational institutions; the advent in our country of English missionaries and educationists bent upon carrying the torch of English language and literature to as many corners as they could; the appearance of quite a large body of independent poems on Indian themes by Britishers like Sir William Jones, Sir Edwin Arnold, Sir Alfred Lyall, D. L. Richardson, Henry de Rozio,

John Leyden, Bishop Heber, Meredith Parker, Laurence Hope, Trego Webb, William Waterfield, Oswald Couldrey, Herbert Sherring, H. G. Keene, Rudyard Kipling, who were all residents of India for long or short periods in some capacity or other—these form the significant background for the emergence of Indian writers of verse in English. In addition to the incentive given by the above facts, a state of mediocrity in our vernacular literatures and the consequent desire of our poets to explore new avenues of thought and expression, a craving to imitate the “master’s” language and literature, and, perhaps, a secret yearning to rival them, spurred the advent of this new band of Indian poets, who have increased both in quantity and quality with the passing years.

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To Kashiprosad Ghosh of Bengal goes the distinction of being the first Indian to write and publish a volume of verses in English. His *Shair and Other Poems*—printed in 1830—though a mediocre production in imitation of the conventional English poetry of the eighteenth century, was, on its appearance, welcomed as an event. Him followed Michael Madhusudan Dutt with his *Captive Ladie* and *Visions of the Past*. After him we have many poets, mostly belonging to Bengal. The *Dutt Family Album*, published by Longmans in 1876, reveals to us the poetic talent of Govind Chander Dutt, Girishchunder Dutt, Hurchunder Dutt and Gomeshchunder Dutt. Sashichunder Dutt, with his *Miscellaneous Poems* and *The Vision of Sumeru and Other Poems*, and Romesh Chunder Dutt, with his *Lays of Ancient India* (Kegan Paul, 1894) and the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* (Everyman’s Series), are two more poets of importance.

Miss Torulata Dutt (1856-77) is the first really important Indian writer of verse in English. With extensive foreign travel and a good amount of social and cultural training in England, Toru Dutt wrote masterly verses. Her *Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan* is a casket of bright gems, and proclaims her as one of the “inheritors of unfulfilled renown.” Two other poets, Manmohan Ghose and Aurobindo Ghose, have deservedly become well known. Manmohan’s poems in *Primavera* and his *Love Songs and Elegies* and *Songs of Love and Death* reveal him as a master of metrical skill. Aurobindo, who, like his brother, began writing verses with English and classical inspiration, published *Ahana and Other Poems* and *Songs to Myrtilla*. But, unlike his brother, Aurobindo soon shed off his Western veneer and became an Indian to the core. Since his retirement to Pondicherry he has absorbed himself in philosophy; but it has not robbed him of his poetry. Most of his poems lie scattered in the pages of his own (now defunct) journal *Arya* and other magazines. *Six Poems* is the latest collection of a few of his verses in book form. Kin to A.E. in the fellowship of song and spirit, Aurobindo fills his poetry with philo-

sophic thought, symbolism and hidden significances. With images of beauty and phrases of splendour, he transforms recondite philosophy into the unsullied Eden of Poetry. As a poet, Aurobindo has a firm hold of the fundamentals of true philosophy, an austere singing quality, and a deep and comprehensive vision.

Mrs. Sarojini Naidu's work is a landmark in the history of Indian writers of verse in English. Internationally known and recognised as a poetess, Mrs. Naidu has so far given to the world three volumes of poems—*The Golden Threshold*, *The Broken Wing* and *The Bird of Time*—all published by Messrs. Heinemann. She has, in a way, carried further the ideal of Toru Dutt—the ideal, namely, of interpreting the spirit and soul of India. Mrs. Naidu's thoughts and themes are entirely Indian and are expressed in the most musical language. The melody of her verse is what enchants the reader, first heralding him into the realm of "magic case-ments." The general public, both in India and abroad, has recognised the poetic worth of Mrs. Naidu and hailed her as the "Queen of our Minstrel throng."

Harindranath Chattopadhyaya, the younger brother of Mrs. Naidu, is unquestionably the most gifted of the poets of the younger generation. Opening his poetic career in 1918 with the beautiful *Feast of Youth*, he has since published several volumes of poems and verse-plays, and earned for himself recognition as an authentic poet. With great variety both in thought and technique, and with an utterance that is masculine and compelling, Harindranath is undeniably the bearer of true poetic fire.

There are many other poets who have made their mark. Swami Vivekananda with his many poems full of the rapture of faith and devotion, Sri Ananda Acharya with his *Book of the Cave*, *Snow Birds* and *Dawn Rhythms*, J. Krishnamurty with his *Immortal Friend* and *Search*, Sadhu Vaswani with his *Voices*, *Quest* and *Forest Messages*, are a class of poets by themselves—singers of spiritual values in line with the singer-saints of ancient and mediæval India.

Intimate contact with English literature as its teachers and interpreters has inspired some of our countrymen to burst into song. P. Seshadri, G. K. Chettur, S. Umamaheswar, M. Sri Rama Murty, S. S. L. Chordia, Armando Menezes, Sanjib Chowdary, B. L. Sahney and, finally, the self-conscious writer of this article with his imposing array of seven books of poems, are examples of professor-poets.

In addition to the above-mentioned poets, there are many others belonging to different walks of life who have published many books of verse, and still others whose poems lie scattered in journals and newspapers. I do not mean to imply that all these have given the world excellent poetry. I just want to point out that writing of verse in English is quite extensively practised by Indians, and by some of them with con-

spicuous success. Poets like Toru Dutt, Aurobindo, Mrs. Naidu, Harindranath, Seshadri and Chettur, who have written in unimpeachable English and with full-winged inspiration, are our pride. It is true that on the whole there is more dross than real gold in the compositions of Indian writers of verse in English, that really good poets are few and far between. But the fact that there is some real gold is enough consolation.

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Indian writers of verse in English suffer badly from two handicaps—the aversion of the English and the antipathy of Indians. The Englishman looks upon the productions of Indian poets with suspicion and contempt. He fears the sanctity of his language is being polluted, and advises the Indian enthusiast to give up his wild-goose chase and return to his own language and literature. Indians do not like their countrymen writing verse in English, firstly, out of a feeling of inferiority complex, and, secondly, out of a sense of awakened national consciousness. There are other handicaps, too, as, for instance, the lack of proper criticism and the absence of proper publicity. The English journals do not, almost as a rule, review books of verse by our writers. The Indian journals have no good review sections; our reviews are more often than not irresponsible, knowing not their true function. In the matter of publicity we are very backward. Generally our poets are their own publishers and are content with distributing complimentary copies among friends and admirers.

The worst of all these handicaps is the crusade against the poets for their sin of writing in English. The Indian crusader has to remember the fact that centuries of attachment and appreciation has made English almost our tongue, and that it will be to our loss if we forsake English language and literature. The sentiment of patriotism need not be so rabid as to make us insensible to facts and inescapable realities. The Englishmen who are against the Indian poet in this respect have to remember that there never has been at any time such a thing as pure English literature. The splendid fabric of English literature is a “coat with many colours”; for, as Compton-Rickett observes in his *History of English Literature*: “To its making have gone the prismatic fancy of the Celt, the sombre passion of the Teuton, the golden gaiety of France, Scandinavian greys, Italian purples.” All these literatures have yielded up practically all their treasures to English writers and do not bear any further exploitation. They have necessarily, therefore, to seek other sources of literary inspiration. Such a source the British colonies offer. Countries like Canada and Australia have already engaged the attention of English writers. India, as the representative of an ancient culture and civilisation, is a yet not much explored field. Since the time of Kipling several English writers of fiction and books of travel have been turning to India for this purpose.

In the long ago, the world of Latin literature had to admit within the ranks of its writers the Romans who pursued the Muses in the distant provinces and colonies, and even men of foreign birth belonging to their empire, who aspired successfully to literary composition in Latin. A similar phenomenon is being witnessed today in the history of English literature. Today English literature is not the literature of England only; it is the literature of the English-speaking people all the world over. England has established limitless contacts with the variety of the earth and of races :

“Her broad roots coil beneath the sea,
Her branches sweep the world;
Her seeds by careless winds conveyed,
Clothe the remotest strand.”

America, with her poets like Longfellow, Lowell, Emerson and Whitman, has already passed into English literature. Canada, Australia and even South Africa are fast coming into notice. India too must, and will, take her place. Reviewing Kashiprosad Ghosh's first book of poems, D. L. Richardson wrote in the *Literary Gazette* for November 1st, 1834: “Let some of those narrow-minded persons who are in the habit of looking down on the natives of India with arrogant and vulgar contempt read this little poem and ask themselves—could they write better verses not in a foreign tongue but their own?” The statement which is obviously an exaggeration in that particular instance holds good and true in the case of some of our poets in recent years. Again, introducing Toru Dutt's poetry to the public, Edmund Gosse observed: “When the history of the literature of our country comes to be written, there is sure to be a page in it dedicated to this fragile exotic blossom of song.” Toru Dutt may be given a page, but the Indian writers of verse in English as a whole will have to be given a complete chapter. There are among our poets a good number whose work, full of sweetness and fluency of native genius, and strength and originality of conception is sure to add richness to English literature. Introducing a series of articles on contemporary American writers, the *London Mercury* (November, 1925) wrote editorially: “In a general way we do not favour the laying of emphasis upon the country of origin of a book. Books are good or bad, interesting or dull. The more good ones there are the better, and if good ones come from all the English-speaking countries the better still.” It is my sincere conviction that such good books are being produced by Indian writers of verse in English. The poetry of some of our poets is a splendid feast of striking beauty and quivering song; a pattern rich and rare.

The question of the possibility of Indians achieving sufficient mastery over English to enable them to be successful writers of verse in that language is now an exploded myth. The writings of some of our country-

men in the past, as well as in the present, are eloquent answers to the charges of glib-tongued critics. And if in poetry you deem language subsidiary and thought primary, even then our poets are strong. Romain Rolland hailed Sri Aurobindo as a "radiant King of thought." All our Indian poets may not lay claim to a share in that glorious compliment, but several of them are indisputable inheritors of the rich kingdom of thought. For us, thought is more natural than even speech. Our poets play with thoughts as spontaneously as a bride plays with smiles, as freely as the wind plays with the leaves, for our poets are the poets of this "clime of flowers and stars," of this

". . . sweet Indian land
Whose air is balm; whose ocean spreads
O'er coral rocks and amber beds;
Whose mountains pregnant by the beam
Of the warm sun with diamonds teem;
Whose rivulets are like rich brides
Lovely with gold beneath their tides;
Whose sandal groves and bowers of spice
Might be a Peri's Paradise."

In the region of dreams, where far-flung visions embrace each other, our poets weave garlands of scent and sound and hue in adoration of Eternal Beauty. May the Goddess of Song, transcending the barriers of language and country, welcome her votaries with the folded palms of rhythm into her domain of diverse tones and colours!

The Open-Air Theatre

(From Information kindly supplied by the Management)

THE Open-Air Theatre in London was opened in 1933, and the present year is thus its seventh season. It was a daring, not to say heroic, enterprise in the English climate, the success of which has been won by the sheer hard work and enthusiasm of its organisers and artists. In the words of Mr. Sydney Carroll, its creator, "it has found its way into the hearts of the London public to an extent which, when I originated the idea, I never dreamt was possible."

He was fortunate in securing support from official bodies, H.M. Office of Works and the Board of Education. The site secured in Queen Mary's Gardens, Regent's Park, is ideal for its purpose, being at the same time sufficiently central and sufficiently secluded. In these idyllic surroundings have been performed a long list of plays, in which the Shakespearian comedies—"Midsummer Night's Dream," "As You Like It," "The Tempest," "A Winter's Tale," "Twelfth Night," "Comedy of Errors" and "The Merry Wives of Windsor"—bulk largest. Two historical plays—"Julius Cæsar" and "Richard III."—have also been given, and Milton's masque, "Comus," was a successful innovation in 1937. An ambitious step forward was taken with the introduction of light opera last year, when Mozart's "Marriage of Figaro" and "Cosi Fan Tutte" were produced. "Much Ado About Nothing," "Pericles" and James Bridie's comedy "Tobias and the Angel" have been added this year to the Theatre's repertory, each scoring a distinct success. It was a real inspiration of the management to see the possibilities of "Pericles." One of the most immature of Shakespeare's plays, it yet offers great opportunities for dramatic situations and spectacular effects, with its Oriental costumes, its quick succession of sensational adventures and its naïve emotionalism. The very coarseness of the humour, which unfits it for performance on the ordinary stage, seems refined by the wholesome breath of the outer air.

The casts include some of the most famous living actors and actresses. Phyllis Neilson-Terry's name is inseparably connected with the Open-Air Theatre. Others who have taken part are Fay Compton, Gladys Cooper, Irene and Violet Vanbrugh, Jean Forbes-Robertson, Pamela Stanley, Philip Merivale, Jack Hawkins and Lyn Harding. John Drinkwater played

Prospero in "The Tempest," and Jock McKay was unforgettable as Bottom in "A Midsummer Night's Dream." Robert Atkins, as producer, has been an invaluable asset.

The introduction of dancing has added greatly to the attractiveness of the performances. The superb natural background offered an opportunity for ballet that no properly constituted producer could have missed, and the names of Nini Thielade, Sepha Treble, Gerd Larsen and Guy Massey have helped to make the Open-Air Theatre famous.

Mr. Carroll tells us that an open-air performance is far from being as simple as it looks. The trials of the artists come not merely from the uncertainty of the weather, though this is a cross the hardness of which can scarcely be exaggerated. They have to adapt their technique to new and trying conditions. In fact, an art of open-air acting has been evolved by slow and painful experience, and in the end it is, as Mr. Carroll says, "nothing but an elaborately scientific and complicated piece of mechanism, dependent for its success upon perfect artificial calculations, which can only succeed after continuous experiment and rehearsal." On the practical side may be mentioned one detail, the lighting, which, originally 6,000 watts, is now 40,000 watts. Another material improvement is the filling in and flattening of the ground, by which the aggravating dip in the middle has been removed.

The auditorium has been enlarged and the seating accommodation increased to 4,000. A second sign of success is the lowering of prices, which are now fixed at from 1s. 3d. to 10s. 6d., a reduction of 2s. 6d. having been made in the most expensive reserved seats.

Mr. Carroll is to be congratulated on a triumph he richly deserves. One cannot but wish the enterprise continued prosperity. The idea of the Open-Air Theatre should not be confined to London. There are idyllic spots in the neighbourhood of the large provincial towns where it could be tried out with pleasure and profit, and in the overseas dominions natural conditions would be much more favourable to the experiment than in the mother country. We can picture a performance in the Botanical Gardens at Sydney or Melbourne, for instance, on a perfect day of true Australian sunshine with as a background the true Australian blue of the sea, or on a warm evening with the harbour lights in the distance. What more beautiful or appropriate setting could be imagined for "A Midsummer Night's Dream"?

The London Stage

BY "FIRST-NIGHTER"

THE theatrical season of the winter 1938-1939 made a promising opening. At the turn of the year there were at least three plays running in the West End which have a claim to immortality—"Geneva," by G. Bernard Shaw, "The Flashing Stream," by Charles Morgan, and "The Corn is Green," by Emlyn Williams. As signposts of improved literary taste in the theatre-going public these three appearances were good, and even better is the long run of "The Corn is Green" and the satisfactory one of "Geneva" into the early summer. In fact, the year has been distinguished by revivals of Shaw, with "Pygmalion" at the Embassy and later the Haymarket and "The Doctor's Dilemma" at the Whitehall. It is many years since Mr. Shaw scored a big West End success with a new play, and "Geneva" makes us conscious of the gap which has widened in the years of semi-silence between his earlier and his later manner. The first two acts move swiftly with the sure craftsmanship, the apt repartee, the clever stage-management of exits and entrances, which made the success of "Arms and the Man"; the third is a long-drawn-out argument, marred by prolixity and repetition until it seems to emulate the tediousness of a parliamentary debate, which it resembles more than the trial in a court of law it is supposed to represent. The brilliancy of the dialogue saves it from dullness, but not even this nor the farcical element in the caricature of the two dictators cited before the court can redeem the act. By insistence on an intellectual viewpoint at the expense of the artistic and the dramatic it undermines the structure of the whole play, making an arbitrary misuse of the mechanism of the stage.

A similar criticism might be made of "The Flashing Stream," in that the author's purpose is one of intellectual propaganda. There are other motives—the play of feeling, not over-stressed, in the relations of Karen Selby and Commander Ferrers, a satire on manners in the sketch of Lady Helston, and some good characterisation in the portraits drawn of the younger officers—but the main theme is the sacrifice of love and worldly ambition to the immaterial idea that transcends both. The language of exaltation put into the mouths of the two chief personages sounds more like the utterance of a poet or a seer than of two eminent mathematicians, but it is all one in whatever guise the superman appears; the problem is

always the same—to what extent is he justified in offering up on the altar of his mission, not only the homely joys and comfort of his own life, but the rank and file of his fellow-men? The genius, inspired by the faith that is in him, with intense vision blinding him to all outside the light on which his eyes are fixed, can give only one reply. The author identifies himself with his hero (not in the banal happy ending—the bias would have been even more apparent in a tragic one), but perhaps a Shakespeare would have left the question without a positive answer.

"The Corn is Green" possesses that element of human sympathy lacking in "Geneva" and "The Flashing Stream." Is this the secret of its continued success? No doubt the superb acting of Dame Sybil Thorn-dike, ably seconded by that of Mr. Emlyn Williams, is partly responsible for the long run of the play, but the skill in presentation serves but to bring home its intrinsic worth. Its theme is in essence the reverse of that postulated in "The Flashing Stream"; it shows an intellectual ideal defeated through neglect of the incalculable human factor. The swift rise to fame of the young author is one of the most encouraging events in the history of the contemporary theatre.

In the pieces of minor importance there is little that is new to record. "Good-bye, Mr. Chips" achieved a satisfactory run, in spite of every conceivable fault of construction, sentimentality and conventionalism of character, by holding fast to those traditions of behaviour which have the force of a law for the great majority of Englishmen. If every play about the "public-school spirit" is not predestined to exceptional success, at least none has come to failure.

The lighter comedies, "Quiet Wedding" and "Room for Two," show no variation from type. The last-named—a daring essay in the "bathroom scenes," to which we have advanced from the "bedroom scenes" considered deliciously shocking ten years ago—achieves its object of amusing. Some of the scenes are uproariously funny and the humour of situation is reinforced by the witty dialogue; but, after all, the plot is based on an age-old device, the impersonation of a member of one sex by a member of the other, which has always drawn laughter, from the days of Shakespeare or earlier playwrights to those of Brandon Thomas. Apropos of the latter, the Christmas revival of "Charley's Aunt" at the Haymarket Theatre, only a few yards from the Comedy, where "Room for Two" was being played, invited comparisons with late Victorian farce and incidentally with the moral standards of a past age. It is safe to say that "Charley's Aunt" will still be on the boards long after its imitators have been forgotten. It succeeds in being funny without being naughty, and leads us to ask whether the younger comedy depends overmuch on mere impudent audacity. Certainly, if all the situations that would have horrified our grandmothers were eliminated there would not be very much left.

"Quiet Wedding," by Esther McCracken, is a much more serious and artistic effort. Its frankness in discussing the married state voices a youthful intolerance of pious shams and soul-deadening conventions. In an age which prides itself on a respect for truth it is hard to see what exception can be taken to such representations on the stage, and we cannot understand why this play met with disapproval in certain quarters.

"Number Six," an adaptation from a novel by Edgar Wallace, is a thriller of which it is not necessary to say more than that it was well staged and well acted. Of the other plays put on at or just before the New Year, one need mention only the survivors, though one may pause to regret that "Windfall," by Howard Irving Young and Jeffrey Dell, did not have a longer run. This is a soundly constructed comedy, with some dramatic scenes, and a uniformly faithful delineation of suburban types.

In light comedy, two contrasting themes are offered by "Dear Octopus" (Dodie Smith) and "Design for Living" (Noel Coward). The former is even more disjointed than "Call it a Day," but its faults of construction are compensated by good characterisation, naturalness in dialogue and the touch of sentimentality which makes the theatre-going world kin. The moral does not become apparent until the last act, but it is there, and it is the sort of moral that the British conscience approves. The play is sound at the core, despite the occasional flippancy of the dialogue. "Dear Octopus" is the family, which twines its tentacles into the lives of all its members, but even while they struggle and protest they do not and will not deny the beloved tyrant. In "Design for Living" the converse proposition is enunciated if not proved. It is the story of a triangle, or rather a quadrangle, in which the author seeks to demonstrate that a woman may be in love with two men, if not three, simultaneously. In the person of Gilda the sex revolts against the subjugation to domestic tyranny. It goes without saying that the play will not enjoy the success of "Dear Octopus," although Mr. Coward excels himself in brilliancy. When the chief characters begin arguing and demonstrating their several points of view, showing a misguided passion for egotistical introspection, he surpasses the limits of probability and outrages stage technique. The listener feels inclined to remark, like the bewildered New York woman in the third act, "This is the most extraordinary conversation I have listened to in my life."

The number of imported plays put on last spring is a somewhat disquieting symptom, though one hardly knows whether to diagnose it as a reproach to home talent or to home managers. "The Intruder" ("Asmodée"), by François Mauriac (translated by Basil Bartlett), is a work of genius, with a subtlety of characterisation and a skill in dialogue (conveyed in an unusually supple translation) in the best tradition of French comedy.

The American plays presented are of strikingly different types. Omit-

ting "The Gentle People," which is the least original, we may deal briefly with "Behold the Bride," "The Women" and "Of Mice and Men." The first is pure comedy, the second social satire, the third tragedy. "Behold the Bride" owes much of its London success to the acting of Luise Rainer. The play itself does not call for lengthy comment. It is compounded of the ingredients which usually ensure popularity—humour, the joys and sorrows of ordinary people, family affection, flavoured by a good dose of American sentimentality. It is significant as pointing the return to a more wholesome type of comedy, with a real idealism underneath its surface fun. "The Women," by Clare Boothe, is a daring experiment—a play with a cast of forty women and not one man. Of course there are men in the story, which in fact hinges on the unfaithfulness of the sterner sex, but, rather irritatingly, the delinquents so frequently referred to do not appear in the flesh. One does long for the sober note of a black dress-suit amongst the feminine fripperies, almost as much as one yearns for a decent woman amongst the rough ranchers of "Of Mice and Men," in which there is only one woman character, by no means a credit to her sex.

"The Women" represents the foibles and vices of New York society, and its general tone is repellent, for all that the final scene shows the triumph of virtue and the return of the repentant divorcé to the arms of his wife and family. If the rich women portrayed are typical of the plutocratic Upper Ten, one cannot help feeling sympathy with the few female workers introduced into the cast, who are without exception Communists.

In "Of Mice and Men," John Steinbeck has essayed a difficult and gloomy theme. The tragedy of the poor half-wit, childishly affectionate but with a horrible lust for killing, is worked out remorselessly to its inevitable end. The play is redeemed from hopelessness by the nobility of George, poor Lennie's chum, who shoots him in love to save him from a worse fate, and breaks his own heart. Such a subject needs great skill in handling if it is to escape the pitfalls of crude horror on the one hand or of mawkishness on the other, and the author has done his work in a manner beyond all praise.

The sympathy with poor and humble humanity expressed in this play is stressed even more strongly in "Rhondda Roundabout," by Jack Jones, for many years an unemployed miner, who knows the Rhondda well. The play is a series of episodes loosely strung together, and its technique betrays inexperience in some respects, but the characterisation carries it through. The author knows the world he is depicting and the characters are alive. Not merely the miners, but the bookmaker, the prize-fighter, the chapel preacher, the musician and conductor of "Messiah" and "Elijah" in alternate years, tradesmen, wives, sweethearts, Communists and bourgeois, all go to make up the scene, which could not have been staged from anywhere but Wales.

The disquieting political sub-currents of this year are doubtless responsible for the appearance of several plays based on the Great War and its aftermath. "After the Dance," by Terence Rattigan, shows the deterioration wrought in the character of a rich man in the reckless post-War years, the pathos of "bright young things" grown middle-aged with no deeper creed than a desire not to "bore" one another. They succeed in wrecking their own lives and almost drag the younger generation into the pit with them. This is a finer play than "French Without Tears," though it is unlikely to enjoy a record run, equal to that of Mr. Rattigan's earlier work.

"Only Yesterday," by Adrian Brunel, is a wistful drama based on reminiscences of the fateful years 1914-1918. It differs from other War plays in avoiding the crude realism of scenes from the trenches. The action is confined to a home in London, where the members of a family who do not go to the front live out their tragedy of sacrifice and bereavement. There is fineness of idea and style in this play, enhanced in the London production by the accomplished acting of Miss Irene Vanbrugh and other members of a good cast.

The downfall of Austria afforded material for no less than three plays running simultaneously. In "Juggernaut" the action begins in December, 1913, and ends in March, 1938, thus covering the whole period of the War and the subsequent disturbed time culminating in the Nazi occupation. The authors, E. P. Hare and Anthony Heckstall-Smith, inform us in a foreword published in the catalogue that they have endeavoured to present the Austrian scene during the eventful years 1913-1938, and that they have no message to give nor moral to point, although condemned by some critics for having perpetrated a piece of propaganda. An unbiassed critic might suspect the exaggeration of propaganda in the climax of the last scene, where an eminent Jewish doctor shoots himself when the Nazis have destroyed his clinic and are on their way to arrest him for treason. Such acts of brutal vandalism are rare, even under the Nazi régime. Perhaps we are to understand this scene in the light of the title. The military machine is a Juggernaut which gathers momentum as it rolls, until it gets beyond the control of those who have started it and crushes civilisation under its wheels.

In "Alien Corn," by Sidney Howard, where the scene is once more set in America, we follow the fortunes of two exiled Austrian musicians, father and daughter, whose longing to return to Vienna is doomed to disappointment, although they are helped unselfishly by the band of kindly academicians amongst whom they find themselves. The play may be regarded as a study in the egotism of the artistic temperament. The two artists feel no gratitude for the home provided them when the daughter secures a berth as music teacher in a women's college; they merely revolt against the

limitations of the teaching career and callously make use of their colleagues and others to get them out of it. The professors and instructors in the college are well drawn by one who is evidently at home in the academic world.

Austria is the subject of yet another play, Ivor Novello's "The Dancing Years." The period covered extends from 1911 to 1938, offering opportunities for changes of fortune and varied vicissitudes. The play belongs to the same class as "Balalaika," on which it is obviously modelled. It is a colourful musical romance, striking the ever-popular chords of love, separation and reunion, against a background of changing scenic effects and to the accompaniment of sentimental singing and dancing. The skillfully concocted recipe for a popular success has not failed, a fact emphatically demonstrated by the long gallery queues outside Drury Lane Theatre.

The popularity of musical comedy is a sign of the times. In periods of anxiety and upheaval such productions have a strong escapist appeal, and managers are venturing again to risk capital in the elaborate scenery and large casts necessitated by this form of entertainment. The successful revival of "The Desert Song" at the Garrick gives another instance of the popular appeal of musical and spectacular effects blended in an atmosphere of romance. The action enlivened by humour sometimes descending to buffoonery but never touching actual vulgarity, which provides a welcome relief to an excess of sentimentality, alternates amusement with emotion in a way gratifying to the sort of public that puts distraction before edification.

"The Man in Half Moon Street" is another thriller. Those who prefer light comedy are catered for by "Grouse in June" and "Tony Draws a Horse," or "Getting Married," in which Mr. J. B. Priestley renounces metaphysics for farce, growing hilarious in a succession of funny situations. This play, however, has an under-current of seriousness in its satire of chapel cant and its clever skits on Yorkshire types by a Yorkshireman who knows his compatriots.

As we go to press it is too early to forecast the success of Miss Dorothy Sayers' effort to emulate Marlowe and Goethe in "The Devil to Pay." Nor is an article on the professional theatre a fitting place to criticise "A Family Reunion," Mr. T. S. Eliot's latest experiment in the imitation of Greek drama. An interesting feature promised for the autumn was the London opening of Mr. J. B. Priestley's "Music at Night" at the Westminster Theatre. It is encouraging to hear the hope expressed that a definite step is being taken in the direction of establishing a repertory centre at Westminster with the formation of the company selected for the performance of this play, but the realisation of the project will be postponed by war conditions.

White Poppies

"All the vice of dope hides in the poppy fields of Asia."

SIDNEY HOWARD.

OPERSIAN poppies gleaming in the sun,
How silken fair thy royal vestments shine!
And not of old for Israel's king was spun,
Nor Egypt's queen, a garment so divine.
Like silvery feathers floating o'er the breeze,
Thy pearly petals charm the gazer's eyes,
Who, then, could guess, on merely viewing these,
Beneath such pearls the lurking madness lies?
For on the day thy lovely race is run,
What milk-white madness fills those verdant bowls
That stand so cool and glistening in the sun
Only the lost ones know, who've sold their souls
To win the drowsy spell of lethal waves—
Dupes of a siren spawned in Pluto's caves.

MRS. W. GARLAND FOSTER.

My Book Box in 1939

By THOMAS MOULT

IT was too much to hope that literature would escape the European sickness, and readers cannot have helped noticing the absence to a greater degree than in other years of new books during 1938 by their favourite authors. Mr. J. B. Priestley, who incidentally published one of his best works, "Rain Upon Godshill," a sequel to the memorable "Midnight on the Desert," defended the silence or relative silence of his fellows by reminding us that those who write are peculiarly sensitive at all times to the happenings in the world around them. Normally, he said, their power of concentration enables them to shut out all that would distract them from the effort to create a work of literature. Today, however, they find themselves unable to sit down and conjure from their imagination the stories and poems which, by comparison with events now being enacted in real life, are so trivial in their own view that if they followed usual methods they would think uneasily of themselves as unintentional Neros fiddling while Rome burns.

Whatever we may think of this explanation—and some people are bound to feel that the spirit is, or ought to be, sufficient in its strength to surmount all material obstacles, being supposedly unconquerable, unassailable, and that the authentic artist of today, as Beethoven and Balzac did, should rise triumphant—whatever we may think about it all, it is to be feared that the literary outlook will remain depressed and partly barren until the horizon promises a change in world affairs for the better. Consequently, as time goes on, more and more will authors be influenced by the atmosphere of negation and impotence, and it is conceivable that the only output with any sort of literary or artistic pretension will come from the least sensitive, the least imaginative.

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This suggests that the novel of "escape" may be expected in increasing numbers. Such a novel, that opens magic casements to the reader who has found the world too much with him, can be a legitimate form of literature. Sometimes, however, it is far from legitimate, merely catchpenny stuff for the tired business man and his like, the effect being that the indiscriminat-

ing detester of meretriciousness tars the legitimate and the non-legitimate with the same brush. He does wrong. The authentic poets and the greater novelists have always turned to the "other-world" that belongs to the mind and the imagination. It is remote from actuality, deep in the human consciousness. They have interpreted it vividly and beautifully, knowing their true world to be within them, not outside: a vision, not actuality. And, indeed, the state of men and women who have nowhere to escape to, so that the discord of the material life can no longer hurt them, is to be pitied. Without escape there is no harmony, no romance—a vital word, romance: one of the great words, Alice Meynell declared, "like God and love, joy and truth, which, however they may be interpreted, must always have mystery and beauty."

The reader of this survey will have perceived by now that the year with which I am dealing has, in my opinion, amply redeemed its seeming shortage if one or two books have been born in it that are to be classified as interpreting the "other-world," the life which is truer and more worth while than that of the ordinary novel. He has perceived correctly. One volume stands above most of the better-known works of fiction precisely because it seems to justify, by contrast, a famous critic's word about the majority of contemporary novels. "Admirable novels," he writes, "full of fresh contemporary problems and contemporary life, that deal in a clear-eyed way with marriage and divorce; they describe the problems of the dried-fish industry in unflinching detail, they do everything in the world but interest you ten years later." It does not matter, because there are always more of them, is the conclusion: "and, meanwhile, some small work of the imagination lives for ever."

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Now I do not venture to prophesy that one book published in 1939 will live for ever, but I can safely say it will be read with delight even if it is picked up a hundred years hence. "The Barly Fields," by Robert Nathan, is my best memory. It is an omnibus volume, containing five of Mr. Nathan's novels, two of them about the country village of Barly, two about the city of New York, and one about Heaven. The people in them are "living creatures with foolish hearts and the breath of life." The chief of them include a famous actress, a bishop, a woodcutter, an angel, a dog, and a little green man. Young lovers wander in them as they do in the stories of other writers, but even this would not satisfy some carping folk, for the author warns us in his foreword:

"To discuss the loves and disappointments of little girls and old men, of mice and roosters, seems preposterous to the young realists of today. Yet what is more real than the hopes and griefs of children?"

Is a labour union more actual than a doll? Each signifies something in the human heart: neither one seems any more, or any less, significant. This is not as absurd as it sounds. If little girls did not care to play with dolls any more the world would be very different. . . .”

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And if we responded no longer, one may add, to a certain William Shakespeare, who knew where the truer life is hidden and called out, “Come unto these yellow sands,” there would be no place for such novels as Mr. Nathan’s “Fiddler in Barly,” “Woodcutter’s House,” and “There is Another Heaven.” But there surely is a place for them—and it is the first on my list. I must not be regarded as inconsistent, but only as catholic—readers ought always to be catholic—if I put next to it a work by a very different kind of author—Mr. John Steinbeck, who has come to the top of contemporary fiction with a sensational rise. His “Grapes of Wrath,” published in the autumn after it had been a best seller for six months across the Atlantic, introduces a new note into English fiction—I mean fiction of the more normal type, because James Joyce’s “Ulysses” we have always with us—the note of brutal frankness, unsparing realism not only in deed but in word. I regard it as a portent, for we are plainly at the cross-roads—unless no line between utter outspokenness and reserve is to be drawn anywhere. . . .

“The Grapes of Wrath” tells the epic story of the “poor white” who is driven by economic pressure from the Middle-West to California. In spite of the raw life with which the novel seethes and pulsates, there is beauty in it—Mr. Steinbeck’s short stories in “The Long Valley,” which is also a choice of the year for my Book Box, amply prepared us for this—and I have read few more moving passages in contemporary fiction than Steinbeck’s reflection on Man—Manself, as he calls him:

“This you may say of Man—when theories change and crash, when schools, philosophies, when narrow dark alleys of thought, national, religious, economic, grow and disintegrate, man reaches, stumbles forward, painfully, mistakenly sometimes. Having stepped forward, he may slip back, but only a half step, never the full step back. This you may say and know it and know it. This you may know when the bombs plummet out of the black planes on the market place, when prisoners are stuck like pigs, when the crushed bodies drain filthily in the dust. You may know it in this way. If the step were not taken, if the stumbling forward ache were not alive, the bombs would not fall, the throats would not be cut. Fear the time when the bombs stop falling while the bombers live—for every bomb is proof that the spirit is not dead. And fear the time when

the strikes stop while the great owners live—for every little beaten strike is proof that the step is being taken. And this you can know—fear the time when Manself will not suffer and die for a concept, for this one quality is the foundation of Manself, and this one quality is man, distinctive in the universe.”

Man stumbles forward, painfully. . . . Steinbeck's poor harassed and dispossessed farmers and peasants in Oklahoma stumble their way to the promised land of California pathetically, grimly, tragically, and the author suggests this with a masterly touch. I conclude my tribute to “The Grapes of Wrath” by quoting an instance of such pathos that illumines, gives universality—the universality of the refugee—to the whole theme:

“Mae opened a drawer and took out a long waxpaper-wrapped loaf. ‘This here is a fifteen cent loaf.’

“The man put his hat back on his head. He answered with inflexible humility. ‘Won’t you—can’t you see your way to cut off ten cents’ worth?’

“Al said snarlingly, ‘Goddam it, Mae, give ’em the loaf.’

“The man turned towards Al. ‘No, we want ta buy ten cents’ worth. We got it figgered awful close, mister, to get to California.’”

* * * * *

Another work of fiction that has given the year distinction is an anthology—“A Book of Short Stories,” by Maxim Gorki. It is fitting at this stage of the world’s history that we should be reminded of the heroic purpose of Gorki as an artist through the reissue of the writings that won him a place thirty years ago among the Russian masters. The life he knew had created in him deep anguish, but it never embittered him or turned him into a cynic. He steadfastly refused to exploit for its own sake the sordidness he perceived everywhere, neither could he see it as something absolute. Out of the slime, for him, came saintliness, out of the squalor sweetness. And, as Mr. Aldous Huxley emphasises in what is a very interesting but controversial foreword, Gorki does not definitely state the idea that beneath the misery and cruelty of human life, and in spite of them, there exists a reality that would reveal itself as beautiful if only men would take the trouble to uncover it. He is too subtly the artist for that, in spite of his apparent preoccupation with crude material. Instead, he expresses the idea “almost entirely by means of variations in the verbal texture of the writing.”

Sometimes Gorki develops an intensity that brings his writing near to lyrical poetry. And if anyone should think there is an incongruity in the association of poetry and Gorki’s guttersnipes, or worse than guttersnipes,

sadistic, incestuous, mean, or tyrannical, he would do well to read—perhaps reread—"Creatures that Once were Men" and "Twenty-six Men and a Girl," the stories in which English readers first made the author's acquaintance. The former story is given in a new translation, and we are led to conclude that this has been done by the editors of the volume, Mr. Avrahm Yarmolinsky and Baroness Budberg. It is excellent, and we turn with confidence to the other stories among this collection, of which fifteen have not previously been rendered into English, "Evil Doers," "Lullaby," "Karamova," "Red," and "The Hermit." The two last named are as grim and powerful as anything Gorki ever wrote; life in a brothel and the life of a saintly man whose past is dark with perverted sins—no writer is better fitted than Gorki to choose such themes, because he, above all others, is able, as he does in these masterpieces of his closing years, to emphasise the miracle of life I have already referred to—the miracle of warm human love and tenderness in an environment most harsh, often infectiously foul, and bitter.

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William Saroyan, of whom I spoke in these pages last year, and to whose work I had the pleasure of doing homage before his fellow-Americans when I visited New York during the summer, has again delighted me with a new collection of his short stories. I also read a unique play from his pen which, at the time of writing, has not appeared in England—"My Heart's in the Highlands"—but it will do. Saroyan is going to become a vogue on our side of the Atlantic, and I shall be glad that in an interview, long before that, I ventured to describe him as "The Voice of America." We have none to compare with Saroyan, but Mr. A. E. Coppard, who published a welcome new volume during the year, often reminds me of him in spirit. "You Never Know, Do You?" is the title, and the names of the stories are just as engaging—"Kiss-the-Book Beezer," "A Devil of a Cook," "Pit-a-Pat," and "Rocky and the Bailiff" especially. Miss Storm Jameson climbed nearer to the top of the tree of the women novelists with two novels, "Here Comes a Candle," about modern London, and "Farewell Night; Welcome Day," about the generations everywhere, and Miss E. M. Delafield's best book appeared under the title, "Three Marriages."

When Miss Delafield is content to state her case simply and develop it with warmth and sympathy she is a short-story writer, or rather a writer of short novels, to be reckoned with. In "Three Marriages" the success of two of the three examples of her art in this form—none of them measures less than a hundred pages—is ample evidence that she is better without Jane Austen and Miss Rose Macaulay at her elbow. One or the other of them was there when she wrote the middle piece, which has in addition the

great disadvantage of coming after one entitled "The Wedding of Rose Barlow," that I am inclined to regard as the best short story of the year by an English writer. It is one of the most exquisite we could wish for. Rose, a mid-Victorian girl, is only sixteen when she is married, without having much to say about it, to a friend and contemporary of her mother. Of course she grows up to realise her mistake, and it is natural that her officer-husband's death in India, where he has taken her, should mean a second union with someone nearer her own age. For a time it looked as if she would perish in the Cawnpore horror—which Miss Delafield very movingly and realistically describes—but Rose makes an unhopèd-for escape and returns to the West Country home whose fragrant, serene atmosphere is that of the girl herself and pervades the whole story.

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Before I turn from fiction to the books of another kind that remain in my memory I would like to mention a collection of "Great Stories from Austria." The editor is Count Curt Strachwitz, and he offers the volume as a memorial. In many ways it is an inspiring book to come out of a dead country. Eleven representative authors have been chosen, for their contributions, the majority of them known to English readers—Schnitzler, Stefan Zweig, Franz Werfel, von Hoffmannstal, Hermann Bahr, Wasserman and Paul Frischauer, who delivered, a few days before his country's betrayal and death, the last lecture ever to be arranged with the sanction of the Austrian Ministry in London. It is remarkable to observe how individual each contributor is, for although some of the writers have belonged to other countries since the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, they obviously remained in spirit with the great community which for centuries, as the editor puts it, "proudly bore the name Austria."

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A remarkable feature of recent book seasons is the swing-over on the part of the general reader from books of fiction to books about world affairs. Out of the pick of them—the majority, as I need hardly mention, are written for an occasion and, their topicality exhausted, they have no further staying power—two stand for their essential truth and in one case for beauty: Miss Nora Waln's "Reaching for the Stars" and Mr. Edward Thompson's record of the last twenty years, "You Have Lived Through This." Alongside them I place two other personal works that have nothing to do with affairs of the moment—Miss Edna Ferber's "A Peculiar Treasure" and Professor Ernest de Selincourt's "Letters of William and Dorothy Wordsworth." Miss Ferber has given us a writer's lovely autobiography and the latter has the poignancy of old music drifting softly through a summer garden at night from an old instrument. Beautiful

Dorothy Wordsworth! A woman genius, if ever there was one. What might have happened if she and Coleridge had broken the shackles of convention and gone forth together to freedom! Her references to the great poet in her "Journal" reveal what she felt about the visits to her home among the English Lakes. Here is just one: "Sunday, August 31, 1800. At eleven o'clock Coleridge came, when I was walking in the still clear moonshine in the garden." Nothing much on the face of it: but probe deeply, and we find ourselves deep enough for tears.

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The ivory tower has not been sought by our poets during these abnormally troubled times. They are writing as prolifically as ever, and I have given a permanent place on my shelves to a volume by Mr. Geoffrey Johnson, to another by Mr. John Gawsworth, who was awarded the Benson Medal of the Royal Society of Literature, and a third (but not third in order) to Mr. Christopher Hassall's two volumes, "Penthesperon" and "Crisis." I have already spoken elsewhere of Mr. Hassall's staying-power, especially in the first work, which seems to me to mark him out for everybody's reading. And when in closing my Book Box for another year, I emphasise that the flow he maintains is musical, imaginative and luxurious, and that never does it lose spontaneity, it will be gathered that his stamina and consistency represent grand promise as well as a certain fulfilment. It used to be said that no poet is really tested until he has written on a large scale. The test, I believe, has in Mr. Hassall's case been survived already. "Crisis" is a contrast: the book contains forty-two sonnets. I quote four lines:

Show me no buds, no sprigs, insidious Tree.
Call off your innocent conspiracy
To drag me to my knees in glad thanksgiving.
Just now I'm not so grateful to be living.

A sad, rebellious, negative spirit. But alas, the spirit of the year.

The Knight of Peace

No arms may shield him from a dastard stroke,
Nor will he challenge combat by a glance
Of arrogant supremacy; his lance
Shall be sweet honesty, his only cloak
Transparent truth; his object, to invoke
The unknown worth that lies in fettered trance
In weaker souls, till some deep call may chance
To wake to action what naught else awoke.

With but one single purpose in his soul
He will go forth, nor may his mission cease
Until the moral conquest is achieved
That grants to hope her long-desired goal;
And all the world be saved, mankind reprieved,
Through him whose name shall be The Knight of Peace.
IÆRNE ORMSBY.

Book Reviews

CRITICISM AND ESSAYS

Shakespeare's Boy Actors. By W. ROBERTSON DAVIES. *Dent.* 10s. 6d.

To those of us who suffered as undergraduates from the so-called Shakespearian criticism of Professor Dowden and his followers, Mr. Davies' scholarly analysis of female characterisation by the Elizabethan dramatists will be doubly welcome. The book deals in the main with Shakespeare's heroines, but touches upon those of his contemporaries also, in an attempt to arrive at the necessary generalisations about technical method. The days of sentimental idealisation are happily over, and while later critics agree with the Victorians as to the importance of the women characters, especially in Shakespeare's great comedies, as the driving force of the action, their function is shown to be determined in part, if not wholly, by the circumstance that the female parts were played by boy actors. The single-mindedness which characterises a Rosalind, a Helena, a Portia, a Juliet, even an Ophelia or a Lady Macbeth is in striking contrast to the complexities and hesitations of the male characters set against them. A man's conception of a woman is naturally subject to certain limitations, but a new light is shed on the dramatist's method if we bear in mind, as he had to do, that the women parts would be acted by boys. To insist on feminine complexities and inconsistencies might thus have led to absurdities and vulgarities that would have wrecked the performance. It is not possible here to review in detail all the stages of Mr. Davies' thoughtful exposition, which includes

chapters on the work of the boy actors and the Puritan attacks on them, a discussion of the women rôles in both the comedies and the tragedies, the old women and children in the plays and the way these parts were filled, the allegations of indecent speech and the treatment of physical love-making on the Elizabethan stage.

Expressionism in German Life, Literature and the Theatre. By RICHARD SAMUEL and R. HINTON THOMAS. *Heffer.* 10s. 6d.

Expressionism may be called a typically German art form, with as much justice as Impressionism is regarded as primarily French, and Neo-Romanticism, in its manifestation as Pre-Raphaelitism, particularly English. German culture has always been international in outlook, and more intellectual than æsthetic. In the break-up of the social order which began before the War and was greatly speeded up in the post-War period, the seeds of revolt germinated, growing rapidly into a robust plant before which the old sentimental traditions withered and died. Expressionism in art is concerned with ideas rather than with sensations and emotions. It discards outworn forms, creating a form of its own, a sort of ejaculatory ecstasy, which brings it near to the articulation of inspired religion. The German mind had a three-fold qualification as an apostle of the new gospel: its age-long training in pure intellectualism, its tendency to metaphysical abstruseness, and its lack of humour. To the uninitiated, some of

the productions singled out as works of genius will appear simply funny. No style lends itself more readily to parody, and there is one famous instance where an author parodied himself in the course of a poem, and was taken quite seriously and solemnly by the reviewers. In other cases the violence and lack of restraint in these modernists will seem merely revolting, but there is much beauty in the more idealistic exponents—Sorge, Lersch, von Unruh, Kaiser. Dr. Samuel and Mr. Hinton Thomas have traced the short-lived phase—it had a life of roughly fourteen years—from the publication of Sorge's *Der Bettler* to the point when it merged into the New Nationalism. The titles of the chapters—in particular "The Search of Expressionism for a New Drama and a New Theatre," "The Social Background of Expressionism and the Challenge of the War," "The Struggle towards God in Expressionism," "The Decline and Aftermath of Expressionism"—are provocative enough to demand the careful reading which they will richly repay.

First with the Sun. By ALAN MULGAN.
Dent. 6s.

In these random essays Mr. Mulgan aims at nothing higher than journalism. They are papers reprinted from various leading dailies in a country where people still have time to read graceful exercises with the pen. New Zealand is the land "first with the sun" of all the dominions of the Empire, and in the essay the title of which has been borrowed for the volume the author gives a very brief summary of her history, particularly as it is concerned with the white man's struggle against the Maori, the character of the native race, and a forecast of the future in which the two races will be united in culture and probably in blood. But all the articles are not so serious and informative as this one. Those on "G.K.C.," "Tramp Ships as Teachers" and others touch on topics of the day. "Long Live the King" and "Hero Wor-

ship" deal, somewhat surprisingly, with literary criticism, and "Art and Life," too, casts a backward glance at the æsthetes of the nineties. "Smells," "Razor Blades," "The Young Reciter," "Slips," "Forgetting" and "Tourists" are humorous sketches, "The Servant" and "The Trooping Season" serve to point a contrast between life today and in the old pioneering times. They are all delightfully written, offering recreation for an idle hour when one is in the mood for good-humoured witticisms at the expense of one's fellow-men, inculcating a good deal of philosophy un-awares.

Twilight on Parnassus. By G. V. ELLIS.
Michael Joseph, Ltd. 15s.

In every age there are those that consider it the greatest. Others feel that nothing contemporary can have more than passing merit. For this reason it is refreshing to read a well-reasoned criticism wherein the writer expresses neither blank despair nor blatant self-satisfaction in the contemplation of the post-war novel.

Mr. G. V. Ellis, author of "Twilight on Parnassus," contends that the change in style is due to an altered public. Dickens and Thackeray were popular with the great newly created middle class; Aldous Huxley, D. H. Lawrence and Wyndham Lewis are popular with a certain intelligentsia, of a different class altogether, or rather of no class at all. As Mr. Ellis says: "Both readers and critics are no longer divided horizontally by class, but vertically by intelligence, between Wits and Nitwits, perhaps." Naturally each reader and critic takes it for granted that he belongs to the former category.

Owing to certain rather obvious faults of style, it is, apart from the hint conveyed in the title of the book, a little difficult to sieve out the author's ultimate conclusions. The impression gained from the earlier chapters is that, while Dickens and Thackeray were great men, Lytton Strachey was a greater; and later

on he has a good deal to say in reference to the "Teutonic solemnity" of the Victorian period. It is true that the latter took itself rather seriously, but the age that produced W. S. Gilbert, Lewis Carroll and Edward Lear can hardly be dismissed in such sweeping phrases.

Moreover, while acknowledging the value of such giants as Hardy and Galsworthy, he hardly does them justice, dismissing "The Forsyte Saga," for instance, in the words: "'The Forsyte Saga' only really began to make Galsworthy's fortune and cripple his art at a time when, almost without exception, the new writers were deriding not merely the values he lauded but the outworn literary form in which not only he, but also Bennett and others, were still writing." Mr. Ellis' gods do not immediately appear; but a few brief mentions of John Galsworthy compared with some fifty pages, mainly

of praise, on Aldous Huxley, show how he feels about the two men.

Still, one can agree in the main with most of his findings, and where disagreement is found one may put it down to personal taste: it is in the writer's own style that the weakness of the volume lies. Mr. Ellis has too great a fondness for the more uncommon words of foreign origin—pyrrhonism, surrogate and insouciant, for instance—when he might just as easily, and certainly more clearly, express his meaning in Anglo-Saxon. And apparently he has not learned the philosophy of the paragraph: in the first part of the book almost every sentence is a paragraph to itself. And as some of his sentences rival in length those of Ruskin, but without Ruskin's symmetrical perfection of arrangement, the result is often wearisome.

J. H. H.

BIOGRAPHY, HISTORY AND POLITICS

Dr. Quicksilver: The Life of Charles Lever. By LIONEL STEVENSON. Chapman and Hall. 12s. 6d.

Previous biographies of Lever have been confined to the badly arranged and inaccurate memoirs edited by W. J. Fitzpatrick and Edmund Downey's collection of letters connected by some bald biographical facts. Mr. Stevenson has used the existing published material, together with some hitherto unpublished, to produce a charmingly written life story, a picture of a lovable character, the development of which is shown in intimate relation to his literary work. The restlessness of Lever's nature, and his sensitive, artistic temperament, which could not endure the life of the tuft-hunting man of letters in London, was largely responsible for the vicissitudes of his career, from the time of his adventurous voyage to Canada, as a boy, to his final exile at Trieste. His biography gives opportunities for interesting sidelights on the European situa-

tion in the middle years of the nineteenth century, and in particular on the state of Ireland. At heart he remained an Irishman of the best type, even though to outward appearances a cosmopolitan. This book, compact in form and readable in style, and at the same time reliable in its facts, should prove a valuable addition to the history of the period.

Justly Dear. Charles and Mary Lamb. By E. THORNTON COOK. Murray. 7s. 6d.

Mrs. Thornton Cook has followed up her previous successes, the historical romances based on the lives of the Brontës, Carlyle and Jane Welsh, by a touching account of Charles Lamb and his sister. It is a human story, full of sadness, lightened, nevertheless, by love and tenderness, and set against a background in which are united all the most brilliant literary personalities of the time. Lamb's character, with its idealism, its enormous capacity for devotion and sacri-

fice, its quaint humour and sincere philosophy, is well brought out. Figures that pass across the stage are those of Wordsworth, Coleridge and Southey, of Leigh Hunt, Hazlitt, Stoddart, Haydon, Fanny Kelly and many others illustrious in the world of art and literature. There are even glimpses of Keats and Mrs. Siddons. The story is based on careful documentation, but told with an everyday realism that brings the two chief characters very near to the reader. It does not fail to emphasise the difficulties with which Lamb was confronted during the slow growth of his reputation, the harsh criticism he had to suffer from critics whose names are now forgotten. The permanence of his fame was at last assured on the publication of the "Essays of Elia" in book form by Moxon, some years after Lamb's retirement from the East India Company, and only a short time before his death.

The Taylors of Ongar. By DORIS MARY ARMITAGE. *Heffer.* 10s. 6d.

This collection of biographical studies has been compiled by the great-great-niece of Ann and Jane Taylor, whose poems and tales for the young, if no longer the household words they were in the Victorian epoch, are still by no means forgotten. In fact, child lyrics like "My Mother" and "The Star" (the "Twinkle, twinkle, little star" learned by heart in childhood by most people today middle-aged) may well be reckoned amongst the immortals, though the title to poetic fame of the authoresses ought to rest rather on other work—the exquisite nature lyrics and fables in verse of Jane and occasional flights like "The Maniac's Song" by Ann.

The family of which the Reverend Isaac Taylor of Ongar and his gifted wife were the parents included also the second Isaac, called Isaac Taylor of Stanford Rivers, who became more famous even than his father as an engraver and miniature painter, and was in addition a writer of no small repute on theological and

philosophical subjects. The first Isaac, and also his son-in-law, Joseph Gilbert, were Nonconformist ministers, and there is a strong strain of Puritanism running through the family character, which comes out clearly in their literary work.

This interesting record brings back echoes of the dignified living and high thinking of Victorian times, depicting a manner of existence that has passed beyond recall, but the lessons of which may still have worth for our fevered generation. The "Taylor Miscellany" included as an appendix should serve to revive interest in a literary accomplishment which at its best called forth unsolicited praise from Sir Walter Scott and Robert Browning.

The English Miss of Today and Yesterday. By ALICIA C. PERCIVAL. *Harrap.* 10s. 6d.

The somewhat misleading title of Miss Percival's book does not prepare us for the careful study she has made of social conditions in the nineteenth century and the development of female education. After a short survey of the forlorn state of things at the beginning of the century, of which ample evidence is to be found in the novels of the period, she goes on to the crusade for higher education carried through, in the face of obstacles and difficulties inconceivable to the present generation, by the pioneers, Dorothea Beale of Cheltenham, Emily Davies of Girton, Penelope Lawrence of Roedean, Frances Mary Buss of the G.P.D.S. Trust Schools, and others. These women, by founding a system of female education on a sure foundation, opened up to the rank and file of their sex the opportunities that had hitherto been denied to all but a favoured few. It is true that the education of women, which was at a relatively high level in Renaissance times, and sank to its lowest ebb in the eighteenth century, had begun to rise when women of the middle classes had more leisure through the improvement in their material circumstances brought about by

the industrial age. Mary Wollstonecraft was one of the first to demand equality of opportunity for men and women. Harriet Martineau, Florence Nightingale, Maria Edgeworth and George Eliot were isolated phenomena who made their personalities felt before the days of organised education. Bluestockings had, of course, existed long before, but the greatest honour is due to those women who, not content with winning advantages for themselves, fought to throw open the doors of freedom for their sisters.

Captain Marryat and the Old Navy. By CHRISTOPHER LLOYD. Longmans, Green and Co. 15s.

Thank goodness adventure stories are still being read! Even today stories of the sea hold their own with those of the air, for the simple reason that the value of a tale lies in the teller rather than in the setting. So it is as a writer of sea stories that Captain Marryat will always be remembered.

He would not have had it so. "I should like," he once said, "to disengage myself from the fraternity of authors, and be known in future only in my profession as a good officer and seaman." But his stories are perennial, while his services to his country as a sailor, valuable as they were, are forgotten.

A midshipman at fourteen, and serving under no less a hero than Lord Cochrane, he saw plenty of action against the French and Spaniards; and at Walcheren, on both sides of the Atlantic, in the Mediterranean, up the Irawadi, wherever he went he found adventure. His most interesting period was his first under Cochrane, but blockading was not all joy. "Boredom," he says, "spread like dry rot through the fleet." But he seems to have filled in the time saving lives—he had actually received 27 life-saving certificates before he was 30! At other times he worked on an international flag-signalling code, or on plans for a cork-lined lifeboat with airtight compartments.

He also objected strongly to the evils of the Press Gang, and wrote against the whole system. But like his first commander, Lord Cochrane, he was too tactlessly outspoken for his time; and once, when in recognition of his signal code he had been awarded the Cross of the Legion of Honour, the King, William IV, himself a sailor of the old school, exclaimed: "Marryat! Marryat! Is not that the man who wrote a book against the impressment of seamen? He shan't wear the order!"

Mr. Lloyd has done full justice to his subject, the emphasis being laid on Marryat the seaman rather than on Marryat the author. He brings before us in a masterly fashion a vivid picture of the contradictory old sea-dog—stern, yet kindly, and a glutton for work; passionately fond of children, yet making a wreck of his home; a rapid, racy writer, and yet a failure as a journalist; making and inheriting large sums of money, and spending them even more easily.

The book is illustrated with reproductions of Cruickshank's engravings and of Marryat's own sketches, and is altogether a notable work. It is a pity that the proof-reading is not in keeping with the authorship.

J. H. H.

The Letters of William Shenstone. Edited by MARJORIE WILLIAMS. Basil Blackwell. Oxford. 32s. 6d.

To most people William Shenstone (1714-63) is unknown; even to students of English literature he is little more than a name, the author of "The Schoolmistress" and some other occasional verses. But, along with many of his contemporaries, he took himself very seriously, and looked upon his letters as his most important gift to posterity. He had plenty of time on his hands, for he early inherited a moderate estate and he never married (though he writes, rather casually, in more than one of his letters of "the progress of my amour").

Shenstone seems to have divided his time more or less equally between com-

posing verses, developing a garden, designing memorial urns and writing letters. Among his correspondents was Thomas Percy, whose "Reliques" he discusses with their editor; and mention is made of meetings with Johnson, Gray, Thomson, Collins and Macpherson, whose *Ossian* seems to have made a profound impression on Shenstone.

He uses altogether different tones to suit his correspondents. To Mr. Graves he writes naturally and with some humour, though he does confess to finding Parson Adams tedious; but to Lady Luxborough and some others he adopts a pseudo-archaic style that makes the reading somewhat difficult. His comments on men and the times are sometimes illuminating. For instance, he says in a letter to Mr. Jago: "You hear ten plays well read by gentlemen in company to one that you will find well performed upon the stage"—and this at the time of David Garrick.

Very rarely does he touch on events of historical importance. That ill-starred venture known as the "'45" is mentioned more than once, but more particularly in connection with some subsequent executions. And of Admiral Byng he writes in March, 1757: "What think you of their management in regard to Mr. Byng? I cannot help thinking the King should pardon him. The court-martial, by acquitting him of cowardice or disaffection, have left no motive for his negligence beside an error of judgment; for we cannot impute supineness, indifference or inattention. And then to sentence a man for error is to expect infallibility."

He makes no pretence to erudition. "I believe," he writes at the age of 33, "it is absolutely impossible for me to acquire a considerable degree of knowledge, though I can understand things well enough at the time I read them." How many students will sympathise with him!

Over 300 of his letters have been arranged, edited and carefully annotated by Marjorie Williams, the whole making

a monumental work covering a period of about a quarter of a century. One page is reproduced in facsimile; and in an appendix is a complete list of "Shenstone's Billets" from the Harvard College library, containing his recommendations to Percy on the preparation of his "Reliques."

J. H. H.

Life of an Irish Soldier. Reminiscences of General Sir Alexander Godley, G.C.B., K.C.M.G. Murray. 12s. 6d.

Few army officers have had so varied and interesting a career as that so modestly recorded here. Born in England, of an Irish family with military traditions, Alexander Godley, on leaving Sandhurst, was gazetted to an Irish regiment, the Royal Dublin Fusiliers. He subsequently went with the Mounted Infantry to Rhodesia to help quell the Matabele rebellion, later took part in the Boer War, where he went through the siege of Mafeking, and in 1910 was appointed General Officer Commanding the New Zealand Forces. While in the Antipodes he visited Australia, where the Military College at Duntroon had been opened, and was proposed by Lord Kitchener as the successor of General Sir George Kirkpatrick, representative of the Imperial General Staff in Australia (the appointment, however, did not eventuate, owing to the decision of the Australian Government to appoint one of their own officers). His service in the Great War began at Gallipoli and ended in Flanders, and during the Occupation he commanded the Army of the Rhine. On his return home he was appointed to the Southern Command in England. His professional duties brought him in contact with most of the leading political as well as military personalities of the time, and in the intervals between his periods of active service he succeeded in visiting and taking part in almost every variety of sport in the remotest portions of the globe—India, North and South America and the Far East. The book is almost

an epitome of the history of the last fifty years, and reflects a fine character, the best type of English soldier.

Henry Grattan and His Times. By STEPHEN GWYNN. Harrap. 15s.

This exceptionally able biography gives a vivid picture of a personality and a time which has gained an added significance in the light of after events. Henry Grattan's work in founding the Volunteers and securing the independence of the Irish Parliament in 1782 may be regarded as preliminary to that of the Home Rule agitators in the nineteenth century, although his ideals differed fundamentally from theirs. The revolution of 1782 was a Protestant revolution. It was inspired by the American revolution, the example of which was largely responsible for its success. It aimed at establishing the rule of a property-owning oligarchy, and paradoxically enough it was the English constitution that set the standard of the claims made against England. Grattan's viewpoint was identical with that of Burke, who, whether he supported the Americans or condemned the *sans-culottes* of Paris, was throughout a consistent advocate of constitutional rule. The Irish experiment was bound to fail in the long run, even had its defeat not been accelerated by events across the Channel. The academic liberty of a privileged handful to legislate, however versed in local affairs they might be, could not be satisfying to the mass of disfranchised Irishmen. Grattan himself realised the weakness of his position, and was in favour of making concessions to the Catholics. He incurred odium because of his leanings towards Wolfe Tone and the United Irishmen, and put up a bitter fight against the Union, even though he must have known that fight to be hopeless. He continued to represent Dublin at Westminster, where he had an honoured career, crowned on his death by burial in the Abbey. His great gifts as a statesman and an orator are brought out in this sketch; oddities and eccentricities, indicated

without being unduly stressed, bring home the personality of a singularly lovable human being. The book is illustrated by six full-page plates, giving portraits of Grattan and his wife and some very interesting reproductions of contemporary caricatures.

Christianity Confronts Communism. By MATTHEW SPINKA. John Gifford. 7s. 6d.

The author relates, in no partisan spirit, but with a due regard for historical truth, the various stages in the persecution of the Church in Bolshevik Russia. He is at pains to bring out the fact that it was not conditioned by casual incidents or the necessity of the moment, but was a calculated action, part of a political campaign which aimed at the extermination of Christianity. The hierarchy stood for an aristocratic tradition which, no less than the ignorant superstition of the masses, was a menace to the new order. Communism itself is to take the place of religion, by providing a new faith of brotherly love for which its martyrs are ready to lay down their lives. We are granted a glimpse—which might have been rendered clearer—of the corruption and degradation in the Greek Church which had brought it to such a desperate pass. Even after the persecution had begun there were quarrels and divisions in the Church itself, while Christian sectarianism outside it gained in strength. While humble priests were starving and dying in self-abnegating loyalty to duty, those in high places were intriguing to keep their last frantic hold on temporal power. Not the least valuable part of Mr. Spinka's able book is the concluding chapter, in which he voices a ringing appeal for the regeneration of the faith. "Accordingly, the Christian Church itself, first of all, must repent in sackcloth and ashes in respect of its failure to hold up clearly before its members the ideals of the Christian social order. Without a frank and sincere acknowledgment of its own guilt and a determination to live up to the implications of the gospel it pro-

fesses, there could be no hope of its becoming an institution capable of leading mankind into a better future."

Canadian Mosaic. By JOHN MURRAY GIBBON. J. M. Dent and Sons, Ltd. 21s.

While most of us remember the French-Canadians, we are not apt to think of the rest of the Dominion as anything but British. It is, of course, preponderatingly so; but that there has been a large admixture of immigrants from all parts of Europe is shown clearly by John Murray Gibbon in his latest book, a comprehensive survey of the various European races that go to make up Canada's population. For instance, there were at the 1931 census nearly a quarter of a million Ukrainians, mostly in the prairie provinces, some 150,000 Poles and about 50,000 natives of the Eastern Baltic States. The other European countries have contributed proportionate shares of the population, so that we must revise our estimate of a Canada divided between English and French.

But Mr. Gibbon makes it abundantly clear that all these motley immigrants are Canadians first and all the time; and though they have been encouraged to retain their respective racial traditions, they are happy and contented under the British flag. As he says: "The vast majority of the Europeans who have come to Canada since 1866 are the victims of social and economic conditions created by wars over which they had no control. So often they had found themselves virtually men without a country—or at least without a country they loved—transformed overnight by some Treaty from one allegiance to another. They left Europe because they were glad to get out."

As an illustration of their cosmopolitan spirit he shows two school photographs, one of which, taken at the Ogden School, Toronto, depicts 29 pupils of as many different races. It is a pity that the author has confined his survey to the Europeans: one would like to hear some-

thing of the Chinese, the Japanese and the negro, not to mention the native Red Indian.

But when all is said and done he has given us both a charming and a magnificent volume. There are all sorts of little intimate touches that appeal. For instance: "Belgians have shown particular aptitude in the development of tourist resorts." And of the Icelandic pioneers we learn: "They read because they loved to read. Mistress and milkmaid, master and choreboy, all united in the strangest ecstasy. They loved books so well that not to possess a few was to be beggared of life."

The illustrations alone—some two dozen plates in colour and over a hundred photographs in half-tone—are worth the price of the book; but more than this Mr. Gibbon has added in full measure an astonishing number of rhymes and folksongs, many of them written or translated by himself, so that history, art and literature combine to make the volume a very fine production indeed. "Steel of Empire" was a great book: this is a greater.

J. H. H.

Testament of India. By ELA SEN. George Allen and Unwin. 7s. 6d.

Miss Sen is one of the most distinguished of Indian women journalists, and she writes in correct and vigorous English, betraying only now and then, by a lapse into native idiom, that it is not her mother tongue. She is uncompromisingly partisan—indeed, her book might be renamed "Testament of Congress." The leaders of the nationalist movement are passed in brief review—Gandhi, Nehru, Subhas Bose and others of lesser note—the two first-named being accorded the passionate admiration of a devotee. The writer insists upon the essential unity of the movement, but even her fervent faith cannot blind her to the realities of communal differences between Hindus and Muslims. She is less than just to the attitude of England towards the struggle for Indian freedom,

exaggerating the tragic misunderstandings and severities that with a little more tolerance on both sides might have been avoided. The main problems are left unsolved; vital questions still await an answer, as: Why did the Round-Table Conference fail? What is the real feeling of the Princes towards the ideal of national unity? Would the Indians be capable of defending the North-Western Frontier, should the British troops be withdrawn? What security would be given for British capital invested in India? Until these questions are answered to the satisfaction of the practical man, national independence cannot be more than a pious ideal.

India of the Princes. By ROSITA FORBES.
Gifford. 10s. 6d.

Miss Forbes' book supplies the answers to many of the questions raised by Miss Ela Sen's. The importance of the States and the Princes as a bulwark of conservative opinion is clearly brought out. It is from them, as opposed to the extremists of Congress, that Britain has received full and free recognition of the service she has rendered to India—as the author puts it in an introductory chapter, that she has, in spite of mistakes she does not seek to deny, “modified religious bigotry, put an end to invasion and pillage, to the exactions of raiding Mahrattas, to the brutal murders of the Thugs, to the wholesale starvation and disease that followed the Moghul, the Afghan, the Jat and the Sikh wars.” The States are less threatened by the menace of revolution than British India because they are less advanced. Their government is still feudal and parriarchal, held together by the personal bond between ruler and people. We read how when the Maharaj Rana of Dholpur rides abroad every man, woman and child rushes out to welcome him, many of them having petitions to present.

“‘Our ruler, our ruler,’” they shouted.

“The whole crowd was united in one ecstatic smile. It seemed to me that the

enormous car was surrounded and at last submerged in that smile.

“Every conceivable offering was poured over us. We might have progressed over the backs and shoulders of delighted adorers.”

In this State, which seems to have been made into a sort of Utopia by the wisdom and benevolence of its ruler, all revenue goes back to the land, and important agricultural schemes are always being carried out under the personal supervision of His Highness.

Of course, the tyranny of the bad prince is the other side of the picture, but from reading the detailed account here given of each ruler, we are led to believe that tyrants are the exception rather than the rule. Each State is self-contained and independent in its self-administration, and the differences in culture and religion, as well as race, are very great, but “Hindus and Moslems alike acknowledge that the immediate future of India lies with the Princes. If they accede, wholeheartedly, to Federation, the Provinces have no alternative but to concur.” That they are alive to the problems of the hour is clear from the remark of one Prince: “Gandhi was the one chance we had of being united—and that wasn't much.” The fate that would overtake “the soft-bred Bengali” who prates glibly of national independence, if he were to attain his aim, is grimly expressed by a Sikh veteran. “Were the British to leave India, there would not be a Province left. We should come back into our own. What is this talk of democracy? The sword knows it not.”

Miss Forbes does not confine herself to politics. The book abounds in fascinating vignettes of Indian life, some of which read like extracts from the Arabian Nights. For instance, there is the story of the treasure of Jaipur, which is guarded by a criminal tribe, secreted in the depths of the Nahargarh, which the reigning Maharajah is allowed to enter only once in his life to look upon his treasure. He is blindfolded as he is led

in and out, and allowed to take only one jewel from the jewel-chamber. Or the case of the late Begum of Bhopal, who had travelled all over the world and reformed the government of her State on up-to-date lines, but maintained the strictest purdah, always appeared in public (whether in India or in Europe) swathed from head to foot in tent-like draperies, and would not yield an inch on the question of female emancipation.

African Odyssey. By JOSEPH CRADD. Gifford. 12s. 6d.

Hero Stories of New Zealand. By JAMES COWAN. *Harry Tombs.* Wellington. 7s. 6d.

An African Attila. By P. A. STUART. *Shuter and Shooter.* Pietermaritzburg. 7s. 6d.

These books may be grouped together, as each tells the story of native valour and savagery at last subdued by British arms. What Mr. Cradd has done for Lobengula, leader of the Matabele, Mr. Stuart has done for Tshaka, the dreaded King of the Zulus, and Mr. Cowan for the heroes of the wars between Maoris and Pakehas.

Mr. Cradd's narrative is a plain, straightforward record of events in which he took part personally. He tells of the old days of transport-riding and prospecting, when white men trekked out into the unknown and often ran the risk of death from wild beasts or wilder men. The first part of the book deals with the Matabele campaign which ended with the defeat and death of Lobengula, a figure not without nobility, who commands respect in spite of his savageries. The second part gives an account of some later adventures of the author, bringing in the native rebellion which began in April, 1906. "African Odyssey" should be read by all who wish to learn about the deeds that won South Africa for white civilisation. Heroes like Major Wilson, Forbes, Burrows and others should not be allowed to go down to their graves forgotten.

Mr. James Cowan is the recognised authority on Maori lore, and the works he has already published embodying his researches into native legends have established his reputation in this field. His latest book deals not with legend but with history, some of it taken from the mouths of veterans or from unpublished manuscripts. It practically covers the history of the Pakeha War, which is related as a series of episodes in story form, but all founded on historical fact and giving a vivid picture of the events, even the topography of the battles which revealed so much heroism on both sides, black no less than white.

Mr. Stuart is more imaginative in the tales of Tshaka, which he puts into the mouth of an old Zulu warrior. The Zulu king, a figure to be ranked with Nero, Attila and the other monsters of history, yet inspires a pathetic devotion in his warriors, who would willingly, not merely on compulsion, have laid down their lives for him. Frankly there is little of kingly nobility in the atrocities here laid to his charge. The author reaches a high level of dramatic narration, and in some of the stories the themes of horror are softened by touching acts of love, self-sacrifice and bravery. In "The Baboon Kingdom" he treats an uncanny subject in a style not unworthy of Rider Haggard.

"Hero Stories of New Zealand" and "An African Attila" are illustrated, and "African Odyssey" has five maps. Mr. Cradd explains the reason for the lack of illustrations in the last-named. "We simply did not carry cameras in those days, and though there were men with the column who would have tackled anything, I cannot imagine one having enough nerve to photograph a charging impi or trying to take a snap of King Lobengula."

More Annals of Natal. By A. F. HATTERSLEY, M.A. *Shuter and Shooter.* Pietermaritzburg. 10s. 6d.

Professor Hattersley's scholarly compilation continues the work begun by

Bird's "Annals of Natal," published in 1888. Christopher John Bird, who was Assistant Colonial Secretary at this time, was the grandson of the Colonel Christopher Bird who was at one time Colonial Secretary of the Cape Colony, and the son of John Bird who compiled the "Annals." The younger Christopher Bird in 1896 sent a circular letter to people in a position to supply further information about the colony's development, and the replies to it, embodying much valuable material, were bequeathed to the Natal Society on his death in 1922. The volume now published is based on such of the reminiscences as have more than a merely personal interest, with the addition of historical introductions and notes. In the words of the author, "The scope of the present volume is the first generation of Natal's history as a British settlement. During the years 1845-75 Natal achieved a political and economic status as a not unimportant unit in the British Empire. Full self-government was to come later; but by 1875 prosperity was assured on the basis of cultivation of the sugar cane and development of the overberg trade. The volume is an attempt to give a mirror of the life of Natal over this period. But, in order to fill in the picture, a few extracts dealing with occurrences which fall either before or after the chronological limits assigned to this volume have been included."

The introductory sections relate the history of Natal in relation to British Imperial development as a whole. Professor Hattersley is to be congratulated on rescuing from oblivion many interesting pages of colonial history.

Pioneer Days in Natal. By BARBARA BUCHANAN. *Shuter and Shooter.* Pietermaritzburg. 7s. 6d.

Miss Buchanan's book is yet another manifestation of the interest in pioneer history, which in the case of South Africa is all the stronger for a somewhat late awakening. The opening chapter gives an account of the first arrival in 1838 of Dutch settlers, who had inherited the

republican ideal of government and named their settlement "The Republic of Natalia." The town of Pietermaritzburg was named after their first President, Maritz. In 1843 Natal became a British colony, the Volksraad having agreed to terms of submission to Great Britain. From that time on, there has been a steady flow of British settlers into the colony, now a State of the Union. The reminiscences included extend over two generations, from the visits of Sir George Grey and Prince Alfred, Duke of Edinburgh, in the fifties and sixties to the Zulu Wars and the death of the Prince Imperial and the Griqua Rising. Amongst much that is of purely local interest there are some interesting sidelights on history. There are 24 illustrations.

The Bush Speaks (Border Life in Old Transvaal). By B. H. DICKE. *Shuter and Shooter.* Pietermaritzburg. 10s. 6d.

A volume of reminiscences of the Northern Transvaal, dealing mainly with native life. It recounts a number of exciting adventures, incidentally throwing light on many a dark page of cruelty and superstition, the worst of which are the atrocities practised by the witch doctors. It is illustrated by eight photographic reproductions showing Movenda and Magwamba girls, Bavenda and Basuto girls in gala dress.

Pietermaritzburg Panorama. By ALAN F. HATTERSLEY. *Shuter and Shooter.* Pietermaritzburg. 7s. 6d.

Professor Hattersley here supplements his more academic work in "More Annals of Natal" by a survey of social history, showing the rapid changes that led from the prehistoric civilisation of the bushmen and the Bantu tribes to the conditions of the present day. The book is interestingly written, giving some entertaining glimpses of manners and customs in the Victorian era. For instance, there were the social distinctions between officials and townsmen which led to

much bitterness in the social life of the young community. Again, we are told of the affection with which Natal women clung to the crinoline long after it had gone out of fashion in England. "'We are perfectly well aware that the crinolines now worn in England are of the faintest and smallest dimensions,' wrote a correspondent in September, 1865, 'whilst our dear girls will still insist in inflating themselves like so many monster balloons.' They were even worn on the farm." There are twelve illustrations, the frontispiece being a colour plate from the painting by General C. H. Gordon, R.E., representing travelling by ox-wagon in 1866.

I . . . Alone. By G. M. ROGERS. *Shuter and Shooter.* Pietermaritzburg. 10s. 6d.

This is an autobiographical novel relating the adventures of an orphan girl (Edith Laura Kelly) who took a position as a governess with a family travelling to South Africa, married there and lived there for sixty adventurous years (1876-1936). After the first lonely years on the farm near the Magalies River, she and her husband trekked to Natal, then settled near Ladysmith, then went on trek to the Transvaal again. On the outbreak of the Boer War they moved again to Natal, and went through the siege of Ladysmith, where he was killed. Glimpses are given of Kruger, Jameson and Rhodes amongst the makers of South African history.

New Zealand from Tasman to Massey. By N. E. COAD, M.A. *Harry Tombs.* Wellington. *British Authors' Press.* London. 6s. 6d.

This book, since its first publication in 1934 used as the standard work on New Zealand history in the universities and high schools of the Dominion, is now published in London. It has been compiled by careful research from documents and personal information inaccessible outside of New Zealand, and fills a need

that will be felt by students of history all over the world. In a prefatory note the author enumerates the phases on which fresh material has lately come to light—the Provincial Period, the history of New Zealand's Dependencies and of her imperialism in the Pacific, the history of the War Period and the rule of the Reform Party under the Rt. Hon. W. F. Massey. The record ends with the conference of 1926 and the Balfour Report, and we are told that "New Zealand was not enthusiastic, but fell into line with the wishes of the other Dominions." The conservatism manifested by New Zealand before her later socialistic experiments is perhaps to be regarded as a natural reaction from the liberal legislation of Seddon.

The book is, however, something more than a mere textbook. It is well written in a clear, readable style, and gives many interesting sidelights on social life, New Zealand's landscape and the many interesting personalities which have been bound up with her development—Edward Gibbon Wakefield, Sir George Grey, Richard Seddon and others. It can be read with interest by the ordinary reader, affording mental relaxation that is at once pleasant and profitable.

Shipwrecks. New Zealand Disasters. By CHAS. W. N. INGRAM and P. OWEN WHEATLEY. *Dunedin Publishing Association.* Dunedin. *British Authors' Press.* London. 17s. 6d.

This book, which has proved a record seller in New Zealand, is of special interest to those who know and love the sea, but it has also much to tell the student of history and the ordinary reader. An enormous amount of research has been put into its compilation. The authors state in the Preface: "After a careful and tedious searching of every news column of more than 35,000 newspapers, consulting early history and delving into age-old records, we have compiled a record of wrecks." The result of their labours is a handsomely produced volume of 502 pages, with over 120 illustrations and an amazing mass of

information in its closely packed text. Mr. Ingram and Mr. Wheatley have both been associated with the sea for many years, and write with knowledge and understanding. The book is more than a dry record of facts. It opens up vistas of romance, and would prove a goldmine to an enterprising writer of adventure stories. There is, for instance, in the long catalogue of ships, one called "A Mystery Wreck," an account of an ancient vessel, the remains of which were discovered near the sea between Arnott Point and the Haast River, and the identity of which was never ascertained.

Zoroaster By PROFESSOR A. R. WADIA.
Natesan. Madras. As. 12.

Buddha. By DEVAMITTA DHARMAPALA.
Natesan. Madras. As. 12.

These books bring, each within a scope of under 150 pages, a summary of the lives (so far as they are known) and the teaching of two great leaders of Oriental thought. Professor Wadia modestly states: "This little book lays no claim to originality." But even if it is based on the researches of other scholars, he has embodied in it the latest results of scholarly investigation, shedding a new light on the career of the master, while certain points of interpretation, especially with reference to the Doctrine of Dualism, he admits "must be laid at the door of the author himself." Zoroastrianism is no longer a world religion, but the Avestan writings are so bound up with the origins of Aryan culture that an understanding of it is of paramount importance.

In introducing the fourth edition of the book on Buddha, the publishers draw attention to the addition of a number of appendices: "Principal Doctrines of the Dharma," "Buddha's Renunciation," "The Enlightened One," "Lord Buddha by Vivekananda," "Gandhiji's Message to Buddhists," "The Study of the Buddha Dharma" and "The Buddhist Prayer." Buddhism is still the religion professed by many millions in Asia, though, strangely enough, by few in the land of

its origin. The author of this book points to the causes of its suppression in the barbaric invasions of India by Mahmud of Ghazni, widening the gulf between the Buddhists and the Brahmans; it is clear from ancient records that the reformed religion had been tolerated by the Aryan conquerors. Even after its practical extinction in India it survived to be the cultural light of Asia in China, Tibet, Siam and even in Ceylon. The nobility of its teaching is here brought home to both initiate and layman.

The Zulu Scene. By JESSIE HERTSLET,
M.A. Knox Printing and Publishing
Company. Durban. 1s. 6d.

This booklet of 76 pages, by an author well known for her stories and articles on native life, and published at an astonishingly low price, is well worth reading. It gives an insight into the customs and mentality of that very fine race, the Zulus, now redeemed from savagery and on the way to acquiring European civilisation. The titles of the chapters speak for themselves as an indication of the contents: "Social Strata," "A Day in the Country with a Zulu Family," "Courtship and Marriage," "Doctors and Medicine," "How Does the Garden Grow?" "Fear and the Bantu: Their Fears and Ours," "The Zulu Homestead," "Native Education," "The Round of Zulu Life." The author reaches the same conclusion as other authorities on the native problem have done: that in spite of seasons of drought and difficulty the best future of the Bantu races is bound up with country life, and if they must be industrialised—"let us hope for country industries."

Cavalcade. By C. M. HULLEY. Knox
Printing and Publishing Company.
Durban. 2s.

Senator Dr. Edgar Brookes, in his Foreword to this little book, remarks: "I do not agree with all Mr. Hulley's conclusions—with some I disagree somewhat sharply—but I welcome the opportunity

of introducing his book as 'an authentic voice of Young South Africa.' This aroused our curiosity as to the author's conclusions, which seem to be mainly a denunciation of the reign of rationalism and scientific invention that has ended in an armament race for the destruction of civilisation, and an exhortation to return to the rule of Christ. Perhaps it is not so easy as it sounds, but Mr. Hulley's genuine love of his fellow-man and especially his goodwill towards the Bantu offsets the pessimism of his general outlook on modern life.

Africa's Challenge. By J. HUDSON STOCKIL. With a Foreword by the HON. JAN H. HOFMEYR. *Knox Printing and Publishing Company.* Durban. 4s. 6d.

A thoughtful study of the race problem in South Africa. It opens with an account of conditions and methods of administration in the territories of other great colonial powers in Africa, in this original way seeking for light on the British problem. It may seem at first sight that French militarism, Belgian economic exploitation and the systematic attempt to Europeanise the native races made by both Portugal and France have little bearing on the British problem, but the author points out that this problem is practically identical with that of the other European Governments, and resolves itself into "the urbanisation of the native." The question at issue is whether a European civilisation can be established in Africa. This will become possible through the migration of the natives to the towns, where the barriers between black and white must be broken down. There is a divergence between the usual British view and that of the white citizens of the Union, who believe that a solution must be found by the development of the two races along their own distinctive cultural lines. But a policy of segregation which may be followed in rural districts fails in the towns. The native must be recognised as an economic asset, definite functions must

be assigned to him and he must be given opportunities for a healthy and useful life by the necessary educational, housing and social legislation.

Freedom and Culture. By DR. SIR S. RADHAKRISHNAN. *Natesan.* Madras. R.1.

This is a collection made up of selections from Convocation addresses, compiled by the publishers. Sir S. Radhakrishnan is one of the most enlightened leaders of modern Indian thought. While loyal to the friendship with Britain, he is, like all the other Indian intellectuals, nationalist in his outlook. He advocates the use of the vernacular Telugu instead of English as the language of culture, and discusses frankly the problems bound up with building a new India. The titles of these lectures delivered to Indian undergraduates speak for their contents—"Universities and National Life," "Education and Nationalism," "Training for Leadership," "The Spirit of Youth," "Education and the New Democracy," "Democracy and Dictatorship," "A New Social Order," "Western Education in India," "Responsibility of Intellectuals," "An Appeal to Women." Not the least significant passages in the book are the author's comments on the political situation in Europe. "The present crisis," he says, "is so stupid and yet so serious in its consequences that civilisation itself may be ruined." He compares the war-cries and emotional outbursts of the political dictators with the parting message of Gandhi to the last session of the Indian National Congress: "I shall never accept self-government brought about by violence." In order to avoid the pitfalls into which Europe has fallen, the youth of India are exhorted to abandon selfish materialism and seek after spiritual ideals.

A Scheme of Adult Education. By A. B. MANDE, M.A. *Ram Narain Lal.* Allahabad. 8 annas.

Mr. Mande, who is Adult Education Inspector, Co-operative Societies, United

Provinces, is in a position to deal with a subject the vastness of which is only partially realised on hearing the bald statement that more than 90 per cent. of the population of India is illiterate. In 1925 he published a book entitled "A Scheme of Mass Education," incorporating the results of an experiment in adult literacy, which he had conducted in that year for six months in the Central Jail, Nagpur. During the intervening twelve years the advocacy of a new scheme for dealing with adult illiteracy has been gaining ground, and enthusiasts hope to abolish it entirely within a period of five years. But in his careful treatise of nearly 140 pages the author does not minimise the difficulties in the way of realising this ideal. The traditional vocational education has fallen into decay and the Adult School movement seeks to replace it by reading clubs and music clubs, supplementing a system of primary and adult education, the formation of libraries and assistance in acquiring general knowledge, not only of book learning, but of public utilities and the values of civilised life. Hygiene, agricultural improvements and civics should be included in the curriculum of the adult village schools, and piety (without dogma) and communal idealism should be inculcated. The suggestions made are eminently practical, based on actual experience in teaching, the lessons being appended in the form of charts in the vernacular script.

A Scheme of Rural Reconstruction. By A. B. MANDE, M.A. *Ram Narain Lal.* Allahabad. As. 8.

Mr. Mande is equally practical in his Scheme of Rural Reconstruction, which is closely bound up with his educational

theories. Bearing in mind that the children of agriculturalists usually become wage-earners at the age of 10, their needs cannot be served by the primary school that is intended to be preparatory for secondary education on the English model. Mr. Mande advocates the establishment of Lower Primary Schools for children between the ages of 6 and 9. Those from 10 to 16 years old would continue their education at a night school Vernacular Middle Schools would give instruction in elementary agriculture and industry, to pupils of Standards III to VI, their work being continued by Vernacular High Schools. Practical subjects should be given the preference in the curriculum, and the aim throughout is to revive village crafts and cottage industries. A National Building Department is to supply inspectors and supervisors on an economical plan.

South Indian Celebrities. Vol. I. By K. M. BALASUBRAMANIAM. *Published by the author.* Madras. R.1.

This is a series of pen-pictures in an entertaining, intimate style of a number of political celebrities. As the author points out, the personalities chosen belong mainly to the non-Brahmin Tamil section. They include the Honourable Sir R. K. Shunmukham Chetti, Dewan Bahadur A. Ramaswami Mudaliar, Kumararajah of Chettinad, Rao Bahadur Dr. C. Natesa Mudaliar, Hon. P. T. Rajan, Dr. (Mrs.) S. Muthulakshmi Reddi, Mr. S. Muthia Mudaliar, Dr. P. Subbarayan. While few of these names are known in England they are prominent members of Madras society, and the book will be read with interest by their contemporaries. It is illustrated with eight photographic reproductions.

TRAVEL

The Land of Egypt. By ROBIN FEDDEN (H. Romilly Fedden). Batsford. 12s. 6d.

The English Countryside. (Pilgrims' Library Series.) By 7 Contributors, with an Introduction by H. J. MASSINGHAM. Batsford. 6s.

East Anglia. (Face of Britain Series.) By DOREEN WALLACE. 8s. 6d.

The Lowlands of Scotland. (Face of Britain Series.) By GEORGE SCOTTMONCRIEFF. Batsford. 8s. 6d.

The Islands of Scotland. By HUGH MACDIARMID. Batsford. 10s. 6d.

Man and the Fields. By ADRIAN BELL. Batsford. 8s. 6d.

The Land of France. By RALPH DUTTON and LORD HOLDEN. Batsford. 8s. 6d.

The spring crop of Batsford books maintains the usual high standard of production. We note with satisfaction the attention paid to the beauty spots of the British Isles, but the books on British subjects show no more thorough knowledge and careful observation than "The Land of Egypt," in which Mr. Fedden does not confine himself to the moving panorama of Nile scenery, but reveals a profound understanding of the Egyptian people and their history. In the introductory chapter he points out that the absence of a caste system in the country has given a chance to the peasants denied under many Oriental despotisms. "The Nile and the soil have perhaps given them that *point d'appui*, that ability to resist penetration and disintegration, which Jewry found in its race and faith. In spite of his situation and his health, the *fellah*, and he is the marrow of Egypt, is by no means played out." The disability of ill health is, however, a serious one, and the information that a large majority of the peasantry is undermined

by an insidious disease will be news to most readers. Fate and their rulers have through the ages been against this people, whose finest qualities and achievements were turned against itself. The future may have better things in store, through the modernisation of industry and social reforms, not the least of which is the emancipated harem.

The introducer of "The English Countryside" points out a dualism in the book, due to divergence of viewpoints in its ten contributors. The minority, comprising Mr. H. E. Bates, Mr. Adrian Bell and Mr. Charles Fry, with the hypothetical addition of Mr. C. Henry Warren, "adjudicates Hodge as the greatest landscape painter in the history of our native art." Mr. Massingham's own attitude is a distrust of purely æsthetic values. The countryside will be beautiful (not merely picturesque) if its life becomes vital, and agriculture and rural crafts are restored or saved from decay. He himself writes in a charmingly descriptive style of "The Downs." Mr. Harry Batsford contributes the chapter on "Hills and Wolds," Mr. J. Fairfax-Blakeborough on "Moors and Fells," Mr. E. F. Bozman on "Mountains and Lakes" and Mr. Geoffrey Clark on "The Coastlands." The sections covered by Mr. Fry, Mr. Warren, Mr. Bell and Mr. Bates are respectively "The Evolution of the Countryside," "Valleys and Orchards," "Fens and Levels" and "The Hedge Chequerwork."

In "East Anglia," Miss Doreen Wallace plunges at once into the heart of the economic problem. The farmer's many burdens and difficulties are discussed with intelligent understanding which compels attention at this time, when the food production of Britain may any day become a matter of urgent importance. The author is, however, not led astray from her main theme—the quiet beauty of the landscape in this typically agricultural country, which has an enduring charm. It was, in fact, the home of Constable and a long line of notable English

landscape painters. The book, like every other Batsford book, is handsomely and profusely illustrated.

In "The Lowlands of Scotland" the economic problem comes again to the fore. The author inveighs against "social services" demanded by the Left and carried out by the Right which "does not stop to explain why these meals are necessary or why starvation wages and unemployment are necessary. Good God! One look at Scotland shows work everywhere crying to be done; and although poverty is abject we know that there is enough to go round, that wages could be universally adequate." Official interference is well meaning no doubt, but often defeats its own end. "In the country places the Agricultural Wages Act has done away with the supplies of milk, potatoes and oatmeal, that were by immemorial tradition part of the wages of the hind. He must now buy all these and give his ha'pence to the Marketing Board. In many cases this amounts to a definite reduction in already scant wages." The neglect and mismanagement of the fisheries industry is another grievance. There is no adequate conservation even of public monuments—witness the degradation of Stirling Castle into a barracks. But in spite of the injustices that abound in a country too often regarded as the poor step-sister of England, it is a lovely and gracious land, with a charm of its own, if without the grandeur of the Highlands, and enriched by architecture and historical associations.

Mr. Hugh Macdiarmid, in the Author's Note, prefacing "The Islands of Scotland," shows himself to be something of an iconoclast. He repudiates "the *olla podrida* of old wives' tales, day-trippers' ecstasies, trite moralisings, mawkish sentimentality, supernatural fancies, factual spinach and outrageous banality that fills most books on this subject, or with the type of descriptive matter generally churned out. . . ." He is a realist who prefers the light of common day to the "Celtic twilight," which is by the way totally misunderstood by most of its pro-

fessed admirers. He gives us a description of life on these arid rocks, some of them nameless to the world, some uninhabited, one at least populated only by bachelors because no woman would face the hardships of settling there. He relates the facts of depopulation and industrial decline. Some twenty-five of the sixty islands of the Orkneys are still uninhabited. In the Shetlands the inhabitants manage to live on the crops of their small crofts, robbed of the prosperous fishing industry by the exactions of the lairds in former times. The author concludes by expressing his opinion that existing conditions might be greatly improved by a judicious system of colonisation. In the meantime he depicts the wild beauty of the lonely isles, their rich store of antiquities and the simple friendliness of their people, with the aid of a splendid series of photographic reductions.

"Men and the Fields," by Adrian Bell, is illustrated by drawings and colour lithographs by John Nash, which add greatly to the charm and value of the volume. It comprises a series of vignettes of country life, with its homely occupations and quaint old customs, the changing features of the landscape and the varying characters of man and beast. The struggle with nature is always going on, but it is represented more as a friendly tussle than as a bitter fight.

In "The Land of France" the authors lead us through the country, and while avoiding the beaten track touch at most of the prominent points and give a good general impression of the varied face of the landscape. Aspects of French life are shown, from the gaiety of the cafés to the sadness of the funeral pomp so beloved by French people, from the picturesque costumes of the Breton peasants to the chic of the Parisienne. To the many who already know France the book will be welcome, enabling them to renew an old friendship, to those who have not yet made her acquaintance it will offer an incentive to do so.

A Walk Through Surrey. By JOHN MOORE. *Chapman and Hall.* 5s.

Mr. Moore is known for his delightful books on the Cotswolds, the New Forest, the Welsh Marshes and Wales. In his latest book of the countryside he gives an account of a hiking tour in Surrey. This home county is familiar to many of us who are nevertheless ignorant of its extent and diversity. The book reveals fresh beauties in old places and opens up new perspectives in several directions. Mr. Moore has an eye for the human interest everywhere, and draws amusing sketches of his companions of the road, which are the best things in the book, for he frankly admits that he does not care for views, "got more fun out of the trippers than I did out of Box Hill," and protests against the tyranny of the late Mr. Richard Hull who tried to get the public to climb up to the top of his tower on Leith Hill. For all that, he does not omit any spot of interest to tourists. The book is practical in size and price, beautifully illustrated with reproductions of pencil drawings by Barrington Browne, and complete with five maps marking the route.

A Countryman's Journal. By H. J. MASSINGHAM. *Chapman and Hall.* 5s.

The charming little essays which compose this volume are reprinted from *The Field*, to which periodical they were contributed weekly for about a year. Mr. Massingham needs no introduction to lovers of the countryside. He explains in a prefatory note that the themes are varied and there is no connection between them beyond the fact that they were written by the same person. That fact, however, does provide a real link, by reason of the author's very individual style, his personality and viewpoint providing the necessary continuity to the series. He loves the country, the old country sights and sounds, the old customs which alas are passing away, and the beauty of old tools and utensils made by the dying village crafts. The pen-

and-ink drawings by Mr. Thomas Hennell lend an added charm to the book, and we take this opportunity of commending the initiative of Messrs. Chapman and Hall in the illustration of their books on the countryside by the work of competent artists in harmony with the spirit of the author.

A City Stirs. By ASHLEY SMITH. *Chapman and Hall.* 5s.

This most unusual book can hardly be classified as a travel book or a manual of topography. It is described by the author as "an impressionistic portrait, hour after hour, from the midnight of one day, until midnight of the next, of the great city of London." The series of essays which compose it is unique, their nearest counterpart, "Sketches by Boz," being separated from them by more than a century. The gulf of time between our own day and that of Dickens is realised when the two books are compared, but in spite of the difference of viewpoint and many differences of outward appearance, London remains in spirit eternally the same. Mr. Ashley Smith writes prose of purity and distinction, verging perhaps now and then on preciousness, and notwithstanding his own modest appraisal of them his essays are something more than impressionistic sketches. They reveal an artist's perception of beauty, an intimate acquaintance with the city in all her moods, and a deep human tenderness and sympathy, above all for the weaker and more unfortunate of her citizens. Dickens himself is not more democratic.

South Africa. By A. W. WELLS. *Dent.* 10s. 6d.

Mr. Wells describes his book as "A Planned Tour of the Country Today," and this sub-title gives an idea of the workmanlike manner of its composition. The reader is shown each country of the Union in turn—in fact, the tour does not end with the frontiers of the States belonging to the Union, but is extended

to embrace practically the whole of the continent. It is complete with 32 pages of coloured maps, a list of places and things to see, a chronological table of the chief events in South African history, a bibliography and a carefully compiled index. It must not be supposed, however, that it is merely a guide-book. On the contrary, it is written in an easy, interesting style, describing not only the sights of each place visited, but the chief events in its history. The author has a flair for what is really interesting, whether in scenery, in history or in human nature, and we learn much about the great men who have made Africa, natives as well as Europeans. The empire-building of Rhodes, the terror of Chaka and Lobengula, give way to the humorous vagaries of Huberta the Hippo. There are 30 photogravure illustrations, besides the maps, and on the whole the book is the best value we have met in a travel book for some time.

Australian Journey. By PAUL MCGUIRE.
Heinemann. 12s. 6d.

The author of this interesting and handsomely produced book writes as an Australian, with a real understanding of the Australian polity as well as an acquaintance with the Australian scene. But he is a travelled Australian, whose education and natural intelligence give him an insight into the problems of the southern continent. He understands the urgent necessity of peopling it and developing the land, in the present crisis of the world's history, which brings a peculiar danger to Australia. He sympathises with the ideal of a white Australia, but sees how the very propounders of that ideal are wrecking its fulfilment by the "progressive proletarianisation" of the worker, who is becoming more and more dependent on the State. The difficulties of developing the country are very

great, and call insistently for State assistance, but the pioneer spirit that first conquered the Bush is being destroyed by a system of protection, subsidies and pensions. The great need is not for socialistic experiments, but for a sturdy individualism, the establishment, not of factories and urban workers, but of a class of peasant proprietors settled on the land, the conservation of forests and water supplies, irrigation and measures against the senseless misuse of the soil which leads to wind and water erosion. It is alarming to read that in all the States about 50 per cent. of the population is concentrated in the cities (Sydney is the second largest city in the Empire), and that the rapid decline in the birth-rate is undermining the country's powers of resistance to the Eastern menace which will inevitably have to be met.

The story of Australia's early days, from the first convict settlements to the gold rush and the romance of the Bush-rangers, is made into a fascinating narrative, and the character of the landscape and the great cities is faithfully described by one whose love for the country has given him a keen eye for its beauties. Besides a map of Australia and Tasmania there are numerous photographic reproductions, illustrating various aspects of life and scenery, against which only one criticism might be made—that the views of the towns are confined to Sydney and Brisbane. The situations of these two are certainly exceptionally beautiful, but all of the capitals have attractive natural surroundings, and one would have liked to see some photographs of Melbourne's stately buildings or of Adelaide, the garden city with its rings of parks and its fine university.

Mr. MacGuire has written a thoughtful and valuable book, which should be read, not only by every Australian, but by every Briton who cares about the future of the Empire.

DRAMA

The Best One-Act Plays of 1938.
 Edited by J. W. MARRIOTT. Harrap.
 7s. 6d.

The art of the one-act play has been greatly developed and improved during the last decade or so, a consummation due in great part to the public-spirited work of the British Drama League. It has evolved a technique of its own which diverges markedly from that of the longer play adapted to the commercial stage, though it is by no means without influence on the latter. The one-act play offers more scope for the idea. It enforces economy of words and concentration of action, has to seize on the typical and significant in character-types. It thus helps to counteract the tendency to diffuseness and irrelevance that so often mars the success of three-act plays. The gain in ideal content is no less than that in form. Originality is called for, the bounds of the normal may be passed without any need for apology. A one-act play may be fantastic or satirical, it may be allegorical or lyrical or historically realistic or merely comic. Experimentation in a medium of this length never becomes tedious. The volume be-

fore us is the twelfth of the series. Eight of the plays are the work of authors new to these collections, and only two have previously been printed. Amongst the most striking must be mentioned *Plans for the Coronation*, by Bertram Henson, a grim satire on convention; *Cats of Egypt*, by T. B. Morris, which throws a fresh light on the story of Cleopatra; *First Corinthians*, by H. F. Rubenstein, a remarkable picture of primitive Christianity; and *The Funk-Hole*, by Harold Brighouse, a comedy based on the crisis of September, 1938. Josephina Niggli also essays comedy in *Sunday Costs Five Pesos*, the scene of which is laid in Mexico, and Helen Foy tragedy, horrible but moving, in *Newgate's the Fashion*. *Nicodemus*, by Joe Corrie, *One of Those Letters*, by Olive Conway, and *The High-Backed Chair*, by Norman Holland, are slighter efforts, each with something individual about it. *The Southern Cross*, by Paul Green, is a well-written play dealing with the aftermath of the American Civil War and *After the Tempest* a fantastic glimpse into the future. Vera Arlett's *Nocturne* shows a sensitive imagination, its weakness being in construction.

POETRY

Last of the English, and Other New Poems. By LORD GORRELL. Murray. 6s.

In the long poem (Part II of the volume) which gives its title to the collection, Lord Gorrell has attempted a series of flash-light snapshots of England, or rather of typical Englishmen, at three critical periods of history, at each of which a break-up of old traditional cultural forms was taking place. The first of the three is the date of the Norman Conquest, when Harold, his mind full of gloomy premonitions of defeat, sees himself as "The Last of the English." The hero of the second period is Sir

Thomas More, who embodies the noblest form of loyalty to the traditional religion which was already passing away before the onslaughts of Protestantism. Mrs. Brown of Bermondsey, somewhat surprisingly, but not inappropriately, takes the stage as the typical English citizen of her age, the present, and there is as much sound philosophy in her concluding words as in the perorations of her more picturesque predecessors:

"They talk a lot about a bloody new world:
 All I say is—and I'll keep on sayin' it too—

If they don't put up the price of a cup
o' tea,
I don't see how it'll matter much to
me."

The scheme of this poem is most original and it will repay study, but most of Lord Gorrell's admirers will turn for poetic sustenance rather to the shorter poems in the first part of the volume, in which he handles the problems of life and death with a penetrating but sensitive touch. The best things are the shorter lyrics, of which the little gem called "Solitude" is quoted here:

I

"On a peak the poet stands,
Lonely, all alone,
On his face the winds of Heaven,
In his heart a stone.

II

"Ever nearer to the clouds
Further he from men,
And his wealth is fairy gold
Dug by dreaming pen.

III

"Cold, ah, cold the mountain's crest,
Fields and flowers above,
Green the valley's warmth below—
And its name is Love."

Poems for Spain. Edited by STEPHEN SPENDER and JOHN LEHMANN. *Hogarth Press.* 6s.

This is a collection by various authors, English and Spanish (the poems by the latter being translated). In his Introduction, Mr. Stephen Spender calls it "a document of our times."

There is a certain novelty lent by the composite publication of verses widely different in treatment but having a common theme and fundamentally a common approach to their subject. But in the main the volume does not differ greatly from the War poetry that has been sporadically written ever since 1914.

A freshness of outlook is to be found, appropriately enough, in the poems by Spaniards. Those by English writers without exception breathe disillusionment and a hopeless pessimism. We are reminded that Spain was new to war, which English and French had experienced to satiety. In Miguel Hernandez' "The Winds of the People" (translated by A. L. Lloyd), especially in its concluding lines,

"Singing, I wait for death,
For there are nightingales that sing
Above the rifles' voice
And in the battles' midst,"

there is a note of heroic idealism that sounds like an echo of Rupert Brooke, a note no longer to be heard from the later English War poets. Manuel Altolaguirre, in "I Demand the Ultimate Death" (translated by Inez and Stephen Spender), reaches an even higher level of self-abnegation. The final couplet,

"Multiplied life from death,
Multiple are the rays of dawn,"

is the climax of a succession of remarkable nature metaphors used to illustrate the triumph of life over death. Even the satiric pieces by the Spaniards have an intensity of passion as though holy anger were yet worth while—an attitude the more sophisticated English poets have outgrown. Pablo Neruda in "Almeria" (translated by Nancy Cunard) cries,

"Yes, a dish for the lot of you, the rich
of the whole earth,
Ambassadors, ministers, guests in abominable assembly,
Aristocrats, landowners, writers labelled
neutrality,
Ladies of tea-room and of divan ease—
A dish of destruction, befouled with
the blood of the poor."

Contrast with this W. H. Auden's "Spain."

"The stars are dead. The animals will
not look.

We are left alone with our day, and
the time is short, and
History to the defeated
May say Alas but cannot help nor
pardon."

A peculiar poignancy is lent to the Spaniards' lines by the fact that they are fighting in their own country, knowing her struck to death. This comes out in "My Brother Luis," by Manuel Altolaguirre (translators Inez and Stephen Spender), and there is a pervading sense of tragedy made more intense by a deep love of the home country, in "Against the Cold in the Mountains," by Jose Herrera Petere (translated by A. L. Lloyd). But several of the lyrics, by English as well as Spanish authors, call for high praise, as those by Herbert Read, Sylvia Townsend Warner and John Cornford, the boy killed when barely twenty-one, who might have been another Rupert Brooke, but for the stern realism of things, which he cannot deny, but which gives a harsh note to his poetry, while doing him to death.

Fifty Years of Rhodesian Verse. Chosen by JOHN SNELLING. Blackwell. 4s. 6d.

As Sir Herbert Stanley points out in his Foreword, "not quite half a century has elapsed since the Pioneer Column came up from the South and opened the road for European settlement, European civilisation and orderly government in the tract of Southern Africa since known as Rhodesia." The Reverend Shearly Cripps, in his Introduction, traces the development of a not inconsiderable literature under the influence of the new environment. Mr. Cripps' own contributions are by no means the least important. He has the true lyric gift, especially apparent in the small pieces, like the exquisite "Winter Veld-Fires." Most of the poets use traditional forms, a notable exception being L. M. Hastings, whose poem "Jones" with its penetrating satire is in the most approved modern manner. But even in this there is evidence of the keen observation of nature

and animals, in the description of the steinbok, which distinguishes the volume as a whole. It is interesting to meet again that noble pioneer of Empire, Kingsley Fairbridge, in his little known capacity of poet. The verses from his pen have the idealism to be expected from one whose vision equalled his courage, and are at the same time eloquent of a sympathy with all living things, even the savage beasts of the wilderness. Take, for instance, the picture of the flight of Ingwi the leopard:

"Coughing the choking life-blood as he goes,
He seeks a hidden deathbed that he knows."

New Zealand Best Poems for 1938.
Chosen by C. A. MARRIS. Harry Tombs. Wellington. 2s. 6d.

This tastefully printed and bound booklet contains selections from the work of nineteen New Zealand poets. Pride of place is given to the three by Robin Hyde, all distinguished by an intensity of feeling and originality of expression. There is a rapidity, a rush of emotion in "Strange Inn" and "Faraway," and an almost unbearable poignancy of sadness in "Isabel's Baby," and no modern poet is happier in the creation of imagery and the coining of the magic phrase. C. R. Allen's "Mackery End in Hertfordshire" has distinction, as has Johannes Andersen's "A Mountain Garden" and Alexa Stevens' "Disarray." The lyrics by Elsa Mary Bosworth call for mention, but limitation of space alone prevents a detailed notice of other poems in a volume where all are good.

Verse Alive, No. 2. Selected by H. WINSTON RHODES and DENIS GLOVER. Caxton Press. Christchurch.

Yet another annual anthology of New Zealand poetry, overlapping in only one point—the work of Robin Hyde—with that compiled by Mr. Marris. The Editors boldly assert their aim to make poetry topical, if possible popular.

"Poetry has been wandering in the wilderness these many years," they state in the Foreword. "It began to look as if it would never be widely popular again. The poets have blamed the public, but the public (which is generally right) has blamed the poets." Robin Hyde writes with passionate fervour in "The Pacifist"; R. A. K. Mason's "Prelude" has force as well as delicacy. A. R. D. Fairburn, Allen Curnow and Denis Glover are devastatingly satiric, but J. C. Beaglehole in "No Rural Spring" has an eye for beauty and Nature's divine compensations. Furnley Maurice's "Poison Gas" and "The Rubbish Heap" by "Amen" are in the modern realistic manner.

Under the Southern Cross. By LORNA M. BADOCK. *Shuter and Shooter.* Pietermaritzburg. 5s.

The chief merit of this book, a collection of pleasing verses in traditional forms, is the understanding it shows of nature and especially the South African scene. There is real originality in the conception of the poem entitled "Pionsettia," in which a fairy fantasy symbolises the birth of the tree. The same intimate study of nature is revealed in "Emperor's Candlesticks," "Morning Glory," "To a Dandelion Seed" and a number of others, illustrated by the sensitive drawings of Hélène Hinton-Catherine.

The Garland. By SUSI P. DAVID. *Basel Mission Press.* Mangalore.

This slim volume by a Christian Indian commands attention for the blend of East and West in its thought. Sentiment is expressed with a delicacy remarkable when we consider that English is not the native tongue of the author. Some of the poems breathe devotional fervour, but a spirit of Oriental Pantheism seems to lurk not far below their surface Christianity. There is an implicit nature-worship in the fine sonnet "The Cleavage":

"In the sad bosom of eternity,
Let this great cleavage rest. In amity

The grass will grow about it, flowers
will bloom
And nod their heads over the silent
doom,
Gay travellers hand in hand will by it
pass
Yet will not know the secret 'neath
the grass,
The sun will shine upon it and the
rain
Will fill the crannies knowing not the
pain,
The winds will sail by smiling in their
quest
Of fragrance, and the stars serene will
blossom
Over it as if on the land o' the blest.
But you and I alone will know what is
Beneath the smiling surface of calm
bliss,
Beneath the benediction-breathing
bosom."

Horizons. By V. N. BHUSHAN. R.1.

Footfalls. By V. N. BHUSHAN. R.1.
The Ananda Academy. Masulipatam.

Professor Bhushan's two volumes of poetry are got up in an attractive format, with woodcut illustrations and decorations. It is interesting to observe the manner of approach to English poetry in practice by one whose critical work has made him an authority on the subject. His command of the language is so perfect that his work might easily pass for that of an Englishman, but it is perhaps significant that he does not use rigid traditional forms. In some of the poems an occasional rhyming couplet is introduced amongst unrhymed lines, but most of them are in blank verse or unrhymed free verse. He finds his own form instinctively, falling into rhythms that suggest themselves subconsciously, as Walt Whitman did. There are a few poems in the modern, realistic style, as "The Test" in "Footfalls," but from this, the earlier volume, we pick out "Destiny," "Hymn to the Spirit of the Earth" and "Flute Tunes" as more

typical of the author, and of India, in their pantheistic philosophy and nature mysticism. The later volume, "Horizons," is richer in reflective poems with a strongly religious spirit, but here, too, we

have a piece of striking nature symbolism in "The Song of the Trees," and he is very happy in the adaptation of an old folk song entitled "Hymn to the Season of Rain."

FICTION

The Young Cosima. By HENRY HANDEL RICHARDSON. *Heinemann.* 7s. 6d.

What is the quality by which "The Young Cosima" becomes a work of creative art, while a narrative biography such as "Justly Dear" remains but a skilful reconstruction? Miss Richardson's novel took five years to write and is based upon long and scholarly research. By a careful study and weighing of documents and letters she sets herself to answer the question why the daughter of Liszt, married to Hans von Buelow, turns from her husband to Wagner, who had at first repelled her. There is no hint of studious investigations in the smoothly running story, no creaking of the machinery is heard. The personages come alive, the analysis of character and motive is worked out in a series of scenes planned to produce a cumulative effect, until the final crisis is reached. It is just a story of the eternal triangle, of matrimonial incompatibility and the final triumph of true love, as human and convincing as any that has been written in a modern setting. Into the background are woven historical figures and events of great significance in the history of the period, illustrating the struggles and disappointments through which the greatest musical genius of the age won to recognition and fame. The touches which bring out the essential differences in the attitude to their art of the three eminent musicians concerned are the work of one with an intimate knowledge of the technical side of the profession, and add greatly to the verisimilitude of the novel.

The Stronghold. By RICHARD CHURCH. *Dent.* 8s. 6d.

This continuation of the love story of John Quikshott and Dorothy Sinnier is

the sequel to Mr. Church's successful novel "The Porch." It is an advance on its predecessor in both plot-construction and characterisation. The vitality and self-confidence of youthful love and ambition is brought into grim contrast with the devastation of the war, which leaves both hero and heroine unscathed, though others of their circle are brought to moral and physical ruin in the years that saw the overthrow of so many traditions and standards. The war scenes, however, have little to differentiate them from those of many other war novels, but the descriptions of life in the Civil Service are something new, and here the author opens up a new field with the sure hand of one who knows his subject well. There is a touching comradeship amongst the officers of "the Service," the bonds of which hold together those who leave it to go to the war and those who stay; a touching generosity in the sympathy and helpfulness shown by his seniors to John, that self-centred young egotist who is using the Service as a ladder on which to climb into the profession of medicine on which he has set his heart. In these older colleagues, as in the middle-aged Matthew Brennan, with their virtues of moderation and circumspection, and the equable temperament of Mary, Dorothy's sister, the artistic balance is struck to the unreasoning impetuosity of the young people, who if left to themselves might have succeeded in wrecking their lives in the heady perversity of the very young.

Gloriana. By C. E. LAWRENCE. *Murray.* 7s. 6d.

This book, classified by the author as a "historical romance," attempts something that has rarely been done by novelists of

the Elizabethan period. It opens with the Prologue, a picture of the destruction of the Armada, the battle being seen far out at sea by the hero, Oliver Barton, carried as a very young child by his father to view it from the cliffs of Dover. But that vision of glory fades, to give way to the troubles and dangers which embittered the last years of the Queen. When he reaches adolescence, the orphaned Oliver is driven from home by the cruelty of his uncle, falls in with a troop of travelling actors and finally is able to join the company of Burbage and act in Shakespeare's plays at the Globe Theatre. But the glory even of the stage has departed, owing to the senseless restrictions enforced by the Puritans. The main historical thread of the novel is the story of Essex, whose complex, egotistical and unstable character is well drawn. Elizabeth enters as the ageing, disillusioned woman, with some shreds of her former beauty and radiance clinging to her, pathetic in her efforts to regain by make-up the appearance of youth, but even in her weakest moments every inch a queen. It is always more difficult to write of decline and failure than of success, and Mr. Lawrence has accomplished his task well, with a quiet distinction of style, and as much idealism as a respect for historical fact will allow.

The Rising. By MYRTLE JOHNSTON. Murray. 7s. 6d.

Miss Johnston has returned to the subject-matter of her first novel, "Hanging Johnny," that remarkable performance which made her reputation when she was still in her teens. "The Rising" deals with the Fenian movement in the middle years of the nineteenth century. It relates the tragedy of an abortive attempt at insurrection, shedding much light on the political background of the period, the relations of the American-Irish with the rebels and the deplorable social conditions, poverty, starvation and injustice which provided a hotbed for discontent. But the book is not polemical. It is sur-

prisingly free from political propaganda, notwithstanding all its terse statements of fact, which bear the stamp of truth. The author is an artist first, a propagandist second, if at all. She takes the subject she finds ready to her hand and fashions it into a work of art in this tense, swiftly moving tale. She never commits the mistake of forcing an effect, never relapses into mere sensationalism. Above all, she has the faculty of weaving together character and incident; all her people are intensely human—even those slightly outlined as types are living types. And she knows how to tell a story so that the interest does not flag for a moment. Great things are to be expected from this young writer; she is no child phenomenon writing herself out in one book, but is steadily adding to her achievement and gives evidence of great reserves of power and invention.

The Young Pretender. By C. R. ALLEN. Massie. 8s. 6d.

Since the publication of "A Poor Scholar," Mr. Allen has been hailed as the most representative novelist of his country. One can scarcely judge whether he deserves this title, and a truly representative New Zealand novelist would be hard to find, for the Dominion is not yet emancipated from the English tradition. Mr. Allen himself, owing partly no doubt to the circumstances of his life, wavers between the old and the new, and his latest novel, embodying his hesitations, is at least typical of himself, if not of his country. It tells the story of an English boy, King Dale, the grandson of an Earl, who on losing his father is adopted in Dunedin by Bernard Foster, an Englishman who had taken a post as a school-master and settled down as a citizen of the town. King's father has become estranged from his family and arrives in New Zealand with his son as one of a theatrical company. Later on, when the heirs between him and the title have been killed off in the war, King comes into his estates and leaves for England.

This version of the Little Lord Fauntleroy theme is used by the author as a peg on which to hang many delightful vignettes of Dunedin and shrewdly humorous comments on its life and people. But curiously enough few of the main characters are natives of the place. Of the two bachelor chums who assist Bernard in his task of tutelage, one is, like himself, an Englishman, the other an Australian. A typical High Church clergyman is also English, and the great singer fallen on evil days a cosmopolitan, but New Zealand may claim Letty, the little girl who is King's good angel and the heroine of the story.

Song of Years. By BESS STREETER ALDRICH. Appleton-Century Co. 8s. 6d.

A novel of about 150,000 words, dealing with American history in the middle of the nineteenth century. It opens with the settlement of the Valley of the Red Cedar in Eastern Iowa, when the hero, Mayne Lockwood, walks 100 miles on foot to put in his claim for the land he has selected, racing his rival, Cady Benson, who is destined to be his rival in love also. He makes the acquaintance of the Martin family, consisting of the father, Jeremiah, Sarah, his wife, two sons and seven daughters. The loves and marriages of the entire family are related, including the love-story of Mayne and the youngest daughter, Suzanne, whom he marries on his return from the war, after she has consented to marry Cady Benson, believing a false report that Mayne had been wounded and died. He is attracted for a time by Charlie Scott, the beautiful daughter of a Southern family that settles in the district, but she plays with his affections, and he discovers his real love for Suzanne when Charlie Scott has jilted him for her former lover.

Jeremiah Martin is chosen to join the State convention in Iowa City, and national as well as local politics are introduced, with the events of the Civil

War and the personality of Abraham Lincoln.

This is the work of a practised writer, and has all the elements of success. The style possesses a quiet distinction, and the characters are sketched in with firm strokes, all the members of the Martin family being differentiated from one another and made into living personalities. The story is well narrated, and in spite of its length never loses its interest. The book has humour, mingled in a satisfactory proportion with sentiment that never degenerates into sentimentality, and without being overloaded with erudition it reveals a sound knowledge of the social as well as the political history of the period. Its chief merit is its homely, human sympathy, which will be sure to find it a wide public.

The Happy Valley. By PATRICK WHITE. Harrap. 8s. 6d.

The scene of this first novel is laid in the mountain district of New South Wales, Australia. It describes with the realism of a writer familiar with his subject the different types which go to make up the population of an Australian country town: the youngish doctor, married to a woman who does not understand him, who falls in love with the local music-teacher; the practical-minded bank-manager, whose speculations unfortunately go wrong; the family of half-caste Chinese who keep the general store; the wealthy squatter with his snobbish wife and spoilt daughter, the wife imitating Mayfair manners and scheming to marry her daughter to a well-born Englishman, the vice-regal aide-de-camp; the schoolmaster with a pretty, silly, sensuous and extravagant wife whose love-affair with the overseer at the big station ends in a double tragedy, when Moriarty, the schoolmaster, murders his wife and on trying to escape from the scene of the murder falls down dead. The doctor, eloping in his car with the music-teacher, is stopped by finding the corpse of Moriarty in the road, and after this frus-

trated attempt returns to his wife and soon leaves the district with her. The plot works up to a climax with the murder and its sequel, which, however, is achieved by an amateurish touch when the squatter's daughter, to save her lover, the overseer, who is accused of murdering Mrs. Moriarty, perjures herself by swearing that he had spent the evening with her. The intermediate chapters dealing with the fortunes of the various groups of characters are somewhat disconnected, the thread of the story being interrupted by psychological analysis and rather tedious description.

The style is good, somewhat precious and studied, adopting the modernist tricks of incoherence, omission of quotation marks, etc., but in spite of this giving an artificial effect. The general impression created by the story is of a depressing realism. The author has no eye for the beauties of the Australian landscape, of which he reproduces only the unlovely features—the bleakness and piercing cold of winter, and the dust and unbearable heat of summer. The characters also are unattractive, selfish and materialistic, only one or two of them possessing any redeeming traits. In spite, however, of the absence of the qualities that make for popularity, this novel is worthy of serious attention, for the honesty of its purpose, and the truthfulness of its descriptions, although the author has eyes for only one side of the picture. Mr. White may go far, once the mood of youthful pessimism is overcome.

And the River Rolls On. By FRANK WALFORD. *Werner Laurie.* 7s. 6d.

Yet another Australian novel, by one of the coming writers, and with marked Australian features. Its realism is of the uncompromising sort, shrinking from neither the squalid nor the horrible. Mary Deane, a school-teacher, obtains a transfer, for reasons of health, from her Sydney post to a school in a country district of orchards and dairy farms. On the first glimpse she has of it the place

seems idyllic, but when she gets to know it better she realises that there is truth in the gossip she has heard about the "morals" of the inhabitants. It is not a wild, uncivilised spot in the Bush, but one of the small shut-in settlements that are more cramping to the soul than solitude in the wilderness. The plot verges on the sensational when two murders are committed and a third is attempted from motives of lust and revenge, but it is redeemed from mere melodrama by a subtlety of characterisation in the analysis of the "killer," a type whose brutality and megalomania are modified by the sex attraction that makes him doubly dangerous. This sketch gives the impression of having been drawn from actual experience, and as a study in criminal psycho-pathology it is unique in literature. Even Zola never probed the turgid depths of human nature with so ruthless a hand.

The Padre Sees it Through. By NISBET WALLACE. *John Hamilton.* 7s. 6d.

This novel is dedicated "to the remnant that are left and to the youth of the present day." In a prefatory note the author sets forth his modest aim "to record in the form of fiction the life of an ordinary padre during the Great War, and his reactions to the faith, prejudices and utterances of the men and women amongst whom he worked." The circumstances which brought him to the point of entering on the task are given in the prologue, which describes an Armistice Day ceremony in 1938. The village constable, a few war veterans and some others, and the Squire (a war profiteer) conspicuous in the front row of those standing round the War Memorial, represent the survivors of 1918, but for the most part the congregation consists of youth, not one of whom was alive on Armistice Day, 1918. The thoughts of the vicar flash back to August, 1914. Then he sees himself again at Highcliffe Camp, on the sea, in the desert, in France. . . . He tried to speak, but could

not, and he heard a voice saying, "Tell the present generation of what you saw during the years of war."

That task he has accomplished, telling a simple tale in an honest, straightforward manner of the four fateful years, with many unrecorded acts of heroism, not the least of which must be counted to the credit of the chaplains with the troops. There is a love interest, and a satisfactory happy ending will discount much that is sad and grim in the telling.

Sheep Kings. By JOYCE M. WEST. *Harry Tombs.* Wellington. 7s.

Into a novel of 258 pages Miss West has succeeded in compressing the history of a family through four generations, from the emigration of the pioneer ancestor to New Zealand in 1840 up to the death of his grandson and marriage of his great-granddaughter in 1930. It is no light achievement to give this compendium of history in such a comparatively short space and in such a readable form. The novel is written in a graceful, easy style; the characters stand out distinctly, each a creature of his or her own generation, and at the same time a clearly differentiated individual; and the spirit of romance and adventure is present throughout, though never overstrained. The love-stories of the Kings, who acquired extensive sheep runs and became sheep kings in more than name, are told with a tenderness that shows romance too often deepening into tragedy—the simple devotion to the first King of the beautiful Maori girl he married, and whom he found one day horribly done to death together with two of her children; the wild passion of the second, with his undisciplined, half-Maori soul, for the English cousin whose heart he broke; the love idyll of the third, also too short-lived. The story ends with a promise of happiness for the daughter of the house, the last of her line, in spite of the material ruin which the changing times have brought upon the pastoral aristocrats of the last genera-

tion. This is a story that holds the interest throughout, and will be read for entertainment no less than for profit.

Tales by Australians. Edited by EDITH M. FRY. With a Foreword by SIR FRANK FOX. *British Authors' Press.* 7s. 6d.

This collection, the second in the series of which "*Tales by New Zealanders*" was the first, presents in some respects a contrast to its predecessor. Sir Frank Fox, in the Foreword, declares that Australia has "come of age." Perhaps that is more than can be said of New Zealand. It is true that the literature of both countries owes much to what has gone before, both to the great English tradition and to the earlier writers in the Dominions. But while the standard of New Zealand has been set by the somewhat anæmic art of Katherine Mansfield, Australian writers have acquired virility from the example of Henry Lawson and the other short-story writers of the *Bulletin* school, and they have lost the self-conscious diffidence that springs from deliberate imitation. The national characteristics revealed in their literature are summed up by Sir Frank as "a hedonistic joy in life, a disrespect for authority, a wit tinged with cruelty, a freakish humour founded on wild exaggeration. . . . There is to be found, too, a tinge of mystic melancholy, a sense of bitterness—a loving bitterness—inspired by the harsh realities of life in the Bush, where Nature makes great demands on human endurance before permitting her conquest, but enslaves her wooers by her very cruelty."

If no outstanding genius has yet arisen in the continent, there are several workmanlike story-writers represented in this volume, which has a wide range of interest, from the cynical humour of Bartlett Adamson, Xavier Herbert, E. Dithmack and Kylie Tennant to the idealism of Dame Mary Gilmore, and the intellectualism of Eleanor Dark. Glimpses of Australia in war mood are caught in Frank Middlemiss's "Forward, Mr. Fotheringham" and John Laffin's "Yesterday."

Makinta Tales. By G. H. FRANZ. Shuter and Shooter. Pietermaritzburg. 4s. 6d.

These well-written stories, put into the mouth of an old Mosotho native, are a valuable contribution to our knowledge of native lore. The Chief Inspector of Native Education, Natal (Mr. McK. Malcolm), says in the Foreword: "The author shows an intimate knowledge of native life and custom, and moreover reveals a remarkable ability to make his characters live in the imagination of the reader. . . . It is not, however, as a good school book, but a real contribution to literature and ethnology that I am interested in these sagas." We are given an insight into native legend and fable, native religion and philosophy, and there are some touching love-stories and others designed to bring out the differences between the black and the white point of view. The tribal administration in its administration of justice lends subject-matter to other stories, and is contrasted with European methods, not always to the advantage of the latter. The tale entitled "It is Our Law" emphasises the harshness of the English punishment for infanticide as contrasted with the judgment passed by the "old men" of the tribe. "The Law of the Christians" enables us to realise how impossible it is for the native to grasp Christian ideas of sexual morality. On the other hand, the darkest blot on native civilisation, the black magic of the "Doctors," is shown up in all its blood-curdling horror, justifying the labours of the missionaries to rid the people of this dread tyranny of superstition that embitters their lives.

Susannah of the Yukon. By MURIEL DENISON. Dent. 6s.

The *Susannah* books belong to that popular category of stories for young folks which can be read and enjoyed by grown-ups. This, the second one, again brings in the "Mounties" (the North-West Mounted Police), in whose company *Susannah* goes to the frozen North. There she has various adventures and spends Christmas in Dawson. The story takes us back to the early days of the gold rush, giving a faithful picture of the period and the types to be met with on the goldfields. It is exciting without being sensational or artificially romantic. Miss Denison has done good work in creating a charming child character and adding another to the very few books that can be unreservedly recommended for children.

Rich Poverty. By DESMOND SWINNARD. Gifford. 7s. 6d.

This first novel tells the story of a rich man who, after losing his money, takes to the road, and there discovers real friends, in the end winning back love and fortune. The author seeks to force popularity by a too-facile flippancy of style and a quick succession of incident, but there is good stuff in the book in its honest observations on men and things. By far the most interesting character is Alf, the "gentleman of the road," who initiates the hero into that precarious livelihood, and one would have liked to hear more of his quaint worldly wisdom.

TRANSLATIONS

Civilisation, War and Death. Selections from Three Works by SIGMUND FREUD (Psycho-Analytical Epitomes No. 4). Edited by JOHN RICKMAN, M.D. Hogarth Press and The Institute of Psycho-Analysis. 3s. 6d.

The second volume of the Psycho-Analytical Epitomes is refreshingly free from

abstruse technicalities. As the Editor explains in a short prefatory note, the three essays here epitomised "were written for laymen and show the mind and spirit of the author at work, with the instruments of thought he himself has devised, upon three things which are in the very marrow of human life."

The titles of the essays—"Thoughts

for the Times on War and Death," "Civilisation and its Discontents" and "Why War?"—will indicate sufficiently their scope. The treatment given to these themes, of absorbing interest at the present moment, is sufficiently popular to make them easy for the average thoughtful reader to follow. Only in the second essay, "Civilisation and its Discontents," does the style sometimes become difficult and the reasoning less intelligible for the ordinary educated person than it would be for the initiate versed in psycho-analytical terminology and modes of thought.

The moderate price, no less than the intelligence and clarity of the selections, should ensure a wide circulation for the epitomes, which are bringing Freud's philosophy home to many to whom it would otherwise be a sealed book.

Letters of an Empress: A Collection of Intimate Letters from Maria Theresa to her Children and Friends. Edited by G. PUSCH. Translated by EILEEN R. TAYLOR. Massie Publishing Co., Ltd. London. 6s. 6d.

Maria Theresa, Queen of Hungary, Bohemia and Austria in her own right, was probably the greatest royal lady that ever lived. The daughter of an emperor, the wife of an emperor and the mother of an emperor, and the ancestress of kings and queens almost innumerable, her birth and lineage were irreproachable and she never, either in conduct or policy, allowed herself to forget the fact or to depart one ell's-breadth from the duties and responsibilities that her royal and imperial status demanded. She was the mother of sixteen children and her relations towards all of them were those of the deepest affection and regard. But, greatly as she loved her family, she loved her country more, and she gladly sacrificed the pleasures and joy of having them always beside her to the necessity of forming matrimonial and political

alliances with the other great European nations that were already actual or potential constituent members of the Holy Roman Empire. And few of her children who went out on such a quest she ever saw again. But, for as long as she lived, she never lost direct touch with them. She was one of the most assiduous royal letter-writers in Europe at that time, and every letter she wrote was to the purpose and a real letter in every possible sense of the word. This is demonstrated in the most unmistakable manner in the beautiful little volume now under review.

The most interesting and illuminative of the letters here given in admirable translations are those written to three sons and three daughters of the empress. They are brimful of wisdom and they embody, in the clearest possible language, exactly the deportment that a ruler ought to carry towards subjects and others surrounding the throne; and, in respect of the daughters, what they owe to their kingly consorts. Much of her advice to them would today, no doubt, be regarded as old-fashioned—there is no nonsense, for instance, about the rights of women and their alleged equality with men—but, while ever accepting the principle that "we are subject to our husbands: that we owe them obedience, and our one goal in everything should be our husband, to serve him, to be useful to him, and to make him our father and our best friend," she never failed, if we read between the lines aright, tacitly to point the woman's way to a gentler, but none the less real, domination than was ever that of the militant suffragette. The book is one of great moral and political value, and there lies in it one dictum that she wrote to her eldest son, the Archduke Joseph, which alone comes, with healing force, not inaptly to the scare-worn world of today: "Never forget: better a mediocre peace than a successful war."

W. S.

SPECIALIST AND TECHNICAL

Old English Customs and Ceremonies. By F. J. DRAKE-CARNELL. Batsford. (British Heritage Series.) 7s. 6d.

Old English Household Life. By G. JEKYLL and S. R. JONES. Batsford. (British Heritage Series.) 7s. 6d.

These two books, like the others of the same series, provide a mine of information, and are most attractively produced at an astonishingly low price. Even students of history will be unaware of many of the facts given, and others familiar with some of the customs and ceremonies described in the first of the volumes will be ignorant of their origin and significance, information about which is here made accessible. How many know that the House of Commons has power to arrest anybody, no matter whom, and try him for any offence without reference to the Courts of Law? To how many has it occurred that the custom of drawing off the gloves in the presence of the king may be traced to the fear in earlier times that a weapon or a poisoned ring might be concealed therein? Or that the lying-in-state was designed to furnish evidence that the king had not met his death by foul play? The City is no less rich in traditions than Parliament, and interesting details are given of the history of the wealthy trade guilds, or "companies," relics of which are still plentiful. The legal profession is also tenacious of its old customs, and many of the ceremonies of the Church of England go back to Catholic days or even earlier. The chapter on "Customs in the Country" will prove the most interesting of all to an antiquarian. Modern research has taught us that several curious old rural customs have undoubtedly been handed down from pagan times. In "Old English Household Life" this point is brought out very clearly, and we see how rural implements and crafts have evolved through the ages from the far prehistoric times of the first communal settlement.

A glimpse is given of the social background of the Middle Ages, with its opportunities for leisure, even amongst the working classes, much greater than the labourers of today possess, and the development of creative talent and the rich legacy of art treasures left behind by the medieval craftsman is clearly traceable to these favourable conditions.

Both books are admirably and profusely illustrated with colour plates and photographic reproductions.

Nature's Cavalcade. By J. OLIVER WILSON. John Hamilton. 12s. 6d.

A book of nature study, showing an intimate knowledge of plant and animal life, which can be read and enjoyed by all lovers of the English countryside. Mr. Wilson has an amazing knowledge in particular of the ways of birds and wild animals acquired by more than forty years' observation, but he avoids dry technicalities, arousing the interest of even the amateur countryman by the way in which the changing panorama of the open-air world is represented. The arrangement of the chapters is according to the months of the year, the changing life of which is followed through the seasons. Nature regarded from this angle is seen as a moving drama, something alive and dynamic, and by reading a book of this sort an interest in her wonders may be aroused in minds that would shirk the drudgery of learning botany or zoology. There are 28 illustrations, photographic reproductions, in most cases snaps of bird or animal caught in an attitude or in some activity rarely captured by the camera. Others, as "A Winter Morning" and "First Winter Snow on Saddleback," bring home the varied charm of the English landscape.

Sight-Singing and Songs for Schools. In two volumes: Junior Sight-Singing and Songs for Schools, 7s. 6d., and Senior Sight-Singing and Songs for

Schools, 8s. 6d. By ERNEST JENNER, A.R.A.M. *Harry Tombs*. Wellington. *Philip and Tacey*. London.

Quarto volumes, bound in limp manilla, designed for teaching staff sight-singing, rhythmic movement and music knowledge through actual music. The author is well known to Wellington audiences, both on the concert platform and in the lecture-room, as a musician of outstanding ability. He is further a trained teacher, with an inside knowledge of the average child's capacity for imbibing musical instruction and musical appreciation. His book represents a successful attempt to produce a textbook of greater simplicity than any yet published. The method is illustrated by a collection of songs chosen for the teaching of sight-singing, and embodies the essential features of the tonic-sol-fa system, "time" notation and the use of the staff. The first song in the book is written on two sounds only, the second on three sounds, and so on till the entire scale has been learnt. The music is accompanied by full explanatory notes for the teacher, explaining clearly the method in which he should go to work in order to make the lesson intelligible and interesting to the children. As an appendix to the Junior book materials for the making of a picture-modulator are added, the sketches for which show that Mr. Jenner has also a marked talent for graphic art.

The book is a practical and valuable one at a moderate price.

Postage Stamps of the Union of South Africa. Edited by PERCY C. BISHOP. Knox. Durban. 5s.

This useful manual has been compiled by the Editorial Committee of the Philatelic Society of Natal, under the general editorial direction of Mr. Bishop. Senator the Hon. C. F. Clarkson, Minister of Posts and Telegraphs, in a Foreword emphasises its value as a work of reference to philatelists. The effort is not intended to be a "commercial proposition," but a work of service in the interests of the hobby which has almost reached the status of a science. At the same time, it is to be expected that such a book, produced at such a moderate price, will have an extensive circulation, though much of the detailed information given will appeal mainly to the local collector. The historical periods in the different States are defined, the different issues are listed and priced, though the decisions as to price are not intended to be arbitrary. In a note by the Editorial Committee it is stated: "Time and experience will show whether the values assigned are fair and reasonable. A second edition of the handbook, produced in about three years from now, is visualised as a definite possibility."

PERIODICALS

English. Edited by GEORGE COOKSON. Published for the English Association by the *Oxford University Press*. Three times a year. 2s. 6d.

English is the organ of the English Association, but, as the editor expressly states, in answer to a correspondent in a recent number, "there is no intention of making *English* predominantly an educational journal." In view of the fact that many members of the Association are engaged in teaching, the maga-

zine maintains a commendably broad outlook, and is not overloaded with technical discussions dealing with the practice of this profession. In the articles directly addressed to teachers, the aim is to inspire an enthusiasm for the great tradition of English literature, though without neglecting the sound basis of language study. There is no contribution that cannot be read with pleasure and profit by the layman as well as the professional instructor or the student. Number 10 of Volume II. (1939) includes

an intimate appreciation of Lascelles Abercrombie, by Wilfrid Gibson; articles on Siegfried Sassoon, by V. de Sola Pinto; on "Burke's Workmanship," by H. V. F. Somerset; and "A Memory of May Morris," by Mona Wilson. In Number 11 of the same series W. L. Bond writes on "Letters of Mary Russell Mitford" and Mona Wilson on "My Poor Friend Smart." A feature of the magazine that calls for warm praise is the generous amount of space allotted to verse, constituting a much-needed support to creative literary art. We can only mention in passing the contributions of Lord Gorell, Ruth Hedger, S. M. Tusting, and that remarkable poem, "Two Minutes, November 11th," by Courtney Pearce. The reviews and dramatic notices are of unusual interest.

The Librarian. Edited by ALEX. J. PHILIP, M.B.E., "Lodgewood," Gravesend. Monthly. 1s.

The May number of *The Librarian* publishes an article on "Literary Associations of Liverpool," which is packed with information about Merseyside writers from the times of Francis Bacon to the present day. The number of eminent authors, especially among the moderns, who own a Lancashire origin will be news to many of their admirers. In the June number the article on "Conference: Then and Now" is not the technical discourse the title suggests. It is a review covering a period of great changes in world conditions. The changes between pre-War and post-War conferences are described as "revolutionary," and in contrasting the old easy-going methods which after all succeeded in getting something done, with the modern Conference increasing in length and attendance, with its isolation of small groups and interminable discussions on academic questions, one cannot say that the advantage is with the modern procedure. As a practical guide to the librarian, the bookseller, and the general reader this review is to be recommended for the fulness and accuracy of

its reports, information about bibliographies and catalogues, reviews and lists of books of the month.

The Library Review. Edited by ROBERT D. MACLEOD, 3, Dunlop Street, Glasgow, C. 2. Quarterly. 2s.

The Library Review is now in its thirteenth year, and has established itself as an authoritative organ, not merely on technical matters connected with library organisation, but on topics of general literary interest. The contents of the spring number include the "Reminiscences" of Mr. Henry D. Roberts, late chief of the Public Libraries at Brighton; the first of an entertaining series of articles by Mr. W. C. Berwick Sayers, entitled "Library Economy Writers: Genesis"; a thoughtful essay on "Books and Youth," by Muriel Steel; an account of "David Laing; Librarian and Bookman," by John L. Weir; and an interesting article on "Old English Farming Books," by G. E. Fussell, a British authority on farm history research. In the summer number Mr. Alistair J. B. Paterson gives reminiscences in "A Publisher Looks Back"; Mr. Sayers continues his series; and the amusing and informative article on "Prison Libraries: Mainly by Prisoners" has been produced with the collaboration of various publishers of recently published books. Last but not least, Mr. Stanley Snaith, writing on "Books and Publicity," explodes a bombshell that has caused repercussions throughout the publishing world. The reviews are uniformly excellent, and the lists compiled with care and discrimination.

Great Thoughts and Great Reading. Lutterworth Press. Monthly. 1s.

Great Thoughts and Great Reading has solved the problem of serving up improving reading in palatable and easily digestible form. The articles range over a great variety of subjects; most of them are written by famous people or experts, and they are interspersed with short

stories and verse of an edifying but not too heavy type. No one contribution is too long to be read through in a few spare minutes. The magazine can be picked up and enjoyed in the intervals of a busy life, and this is perhaps the secret of its popularity. In the July and August numbers, which we have before us, we note, amongst many other good things, interviews with David Low and Robert Lynd, by Donald Cowie; articles on "The Present European Situation," by Jan Masaryk, and "Empire Defence," by Lord Strabolgi; "Artistry of 'The Tempest,'" by J. Minto Robertson; a series "Is there Life on other Planets?" by Dr. H. Spencer Jones (Astronomer Royal); "The New Blackpool," by S. P. B. Mais; nature study by Winifred Bear, Arthur Groom, "Jay," Professor James Ritchie, Dr. Neil Mackintosh and others, and a large number of historical and topical articles by a variety of contributors. The list of books selected for review shows literary taste and discrimination. Without being theological, the magazine is evangelical in sympathy, its policy evidently being to offer an open forum for the discussion of modern ideas, while holding fast to the foundations of faith and culture laid down in the last century.

New Writing. Spring, 1939. Hogarth Press. 6s.

"New Writing," edited by John Lehmann with the assistance of Christopher Isherwood and Stephen Spender, is a periodical which appears twice yearly in book form and contains some of the most interesting and significant work that is being produced by the younger writers. Its part in the encouragement and development of new talent cannot be praised too much, as it provides what is more necessary to-day, in an age of standardised journalism, than at any other time, an outlet for those whose writing is too unorthodox in manner, length, or matter for the ordinary magazines. Its contributors are foreign, British or colonial authors whose work

is 'left' in tendency (however tired one becomes of that word, it does provide a useful rough classification) and of an imaginative and creative character. Some of those whose work appears in the spring number are already well known (W. H. Auden has eight short poems) and others are comparative new-comers. Perhaps too much space has been given to the Spanish war, with which as many as half a dozen documentary extracts deal. No one could deny the importance of the subject, but democracy is also fighting on other fronts. "The Room," by the young French writer Jean-Paul Sartre, is an altogether remarkable piece of work. Among the short stories one also notices "It's No Use Blaming Him," a commentary on unemployment by Leslie Halward, who is that rare animal, a "proletarian" writer of genuine working-class origin; and the lightly satirical "Crime In Our Village," by Beatrix Lehmann, which is perhaps the most enjoyable because the least heavily propagandist of the collection. Articles on political aspects of the stage and films, together with mass-observation's investigations on "Industrial Spring," make an interesting non-fiction section. On the whole, however, the standard set is so high that it is difficult to pick out individuals for praise. Nobody interested in modern literary trends will fail to buy this book, and it is certain there is no better six-shillingsworth on the market today.

E. L. K.

Poetry. Edited by TAMBIMUTTU, 64, Grafton Way, W. 1. Bi-Monthly. 1s.

This periodical is a brave venture. The early numbers which have been sent us are beautifully produced, with art cover and fine printing, illustrated by woodcuts and photographic reproductions, and contain work by a long list of well-known poets—Stephen Spender, Walter de la Mare, Dylan Thomas, and others—as well as the lesser known. The editor prefaces the February number with a "first letter" running to

four pages, and expressing some sound truisms about the function of poetry. We are told that "Every man has poetry within him. . . . Poetry is the connection between matter and mind. Poetry is universal. . . . Poetry is not individual. It exists as a whole in the universal mind. . . . Reality in life is simple. Life is simple, living is simple, the roots of thought are simple. . . . Complexity is a very unreal thing; simplicity is the only reality. . . . A world without love or beauty is a disordered world. . . . The trouble with the modern world is that it has no *real* beliefs or religion. Poetry is religion." In view of this confession of faith, it is a little surprising that the Editor finds it necessary to append an introduction to Mr. Dylan Thomas's "Poem in the Ninth Month." We are told that it "describes the feelings of a man, in his father's house on the seashore, expecting the birth of a child to his wife." When we know this we are certainly enabled to read some sense into what had seemed unintelligible gibberish; but why, if he is really an apostle of "simplicity," could the poet not give us the clue himself, without the aid of the commentator? In a manifesto published in the April number, the Editor states that "this paper exists as a platform for poets who require more freedom than that afforded in the papers of little hen-coops or cliques. . . ." If the policy of the open platform is adhered to, it will do valuable service.

The Poetry Review. The Poetry Society.
33, Portman Square, London, W. 1.
Bi-Monthly. 1s.

Poetry of Today. 5, Featherstone Buildings, London, W.C. 1. Quarterly.
2s. 6d.

In the August number of *The Poetry Review*, Richard P. Leahy makes a plea for tradition in "Vandalism and Poetry." B. S. Banerjee's "Kazi Nazarul Islam; Realist or Idealist?" introduces a famous Bengal poet. T. E. Casson, in "Tragedy

and the Infinite," gives an interesting analysis of "Hamlet" and the poetry of Wordsworth and Keats. Maccallum Smith has an interesting and provocative article on "The Frontiers of Poetry," and Alice Hunt Bartlett continues the reviews "Dynamics of American Poetry." Poems are contributed by E. A. F. Geach, Edward Lowbury, Ierne Ormsby, Con Harvey and others.

Poetry of Today. The fifty-second number of *Poetry of Today*, the quarterly "extra" of *The Poetry Review*, contains 140 pages of verse by various authors. This supplement has been revived in order to afford an opportunity for publication to work for which space cannot be found in *The Poetry Review*. As the latter is taking on more and more the character of a critical review, the space allotted to creative work does not allow of printing more than a small fraction of the verse submitted which is, in the Editor's opinion, up to publication standard. The generally high standard maintained is a revelation of the quantity of poetry produced by competent versifiers writing today.

The Dublin Magazine. Edited by SEUMAS O'SULLIVAN, 2, Crow Street, Dublin. Quarterly. 2s. 6d.

At a time when so many literary periodicals have fallen to the enemy, Ireland is to be congratulated on having preserved *The Dublin Magazine*. It keeps that balance between the scholarly and the creative which stimulates the intellect without discouraging the imagination. In the three numbers published this year we pick out, more or less at random, the articles on Frank Harris, by Vincent O'Sullivan; on W. B. Yeats, by Austin Clarke; on Darrell Figgis, by Padriac Colum; and "A Myth of Time," by D. M., for their critical value; "Only Juvenilia," by Leslie H. Yodaiken; "Admetus," by D. Murphy; "Miss Holland," by Mary Lavin, for their creative insight, and "The Hare and the Tortoise," by R. N. Currey, for its genuine humour. National in sympathy

as the magazine is, it does not shut out cosmopolitan culture—witness the article entitled “L’Avenir du Christianisme,” in French, by D. Merejovsky. The verse printed is in the main traditional in form without being merely imitative, but there is a modified modernism, with no loss of rhythmic cadence, in the work of F. R. Higgins, V. C. Le Fanu, and Alun Lewis. The bibliographical notes and reviews form a strong section, showing a sound knowledge of contemporary letters and sense and courage in assessing the final worth of the works selected for notice.

The Irish Monthly. Edited by the JESUIT FATHERS, 5, Great Denmark Street, Dublin. Monthly. 6d.

The Irish Monthly is more definitely Catholic in its tendencies, while maintaining the high standard of culture associated with the Jesuit movement. The magazine is now in its sixty-sixth year, and it has made a reputation for consistent good writing on a variety of subjects—politics, art, and literature—besides the activities of the Church. If an inevitable bias is to be observed in the allusions to events in Russia or Spain, there seems to be unhappily too much ground for the atrocities alleged in the article on “Nuns in the Third Reich,” in the August number. An incentive to the study and practice of good literature is given, not merely by the excellent reviews, but also by the generous amount of space accorded to creative writing. The merit of some of the contributions is unusually high, while none are negligible. From the numbers before us we single out the poetry of Emily Hughes for its lyric quality, and the stories “Fenian’s Funeral,” by Philip Rooney, in the June number, and “The Young Priest,” by Francis Carty, in the July number, one a piece of tragic irony and the other its antithesis, with its theme of mystic exaltation. The delicate fantasy, “The Story of Forget-Me-Not and Lily of the Valley,” in the August number, is re-

printed from Maurice Baring’s “The Glass Mender.”

The Welsh Review. Edited by GWYN JONES, 39, Penarth Road, Cardiff. Monthly. 1s.

The Welsh Review was founded last January, to fill the need for a journal for the English-speaking Welshman. Its ideal is to publish each month fresh creative work in verse and prose, in addition to articles of current interest. In the August number, the first of the second volume, the Editor informs his readers that “*The Welsh Review* has weathered a bad storm and come, though not into the careless rapture of safe harbourage, yet into calmer water.” This is good news. It goes without saying that a literary venture of this kind, especially in the conditions that prevail to-day, will have a struggle to establish itself. It has to contend not only with the discouraging circumstances which have proved fatal to so many English literary magazines, but also with the competition of publications in the Welsh language. There are, however, enough English-speaking Welshmen who do not know Welsh to justify the publication of a periodical for their use, and we are glad to read that a sufficient number of those interested have come forward in its support. The editorial policy is commendably broad. We note, for instance, that the verse includes specimens from widely different schools. The poems in the January number, by W. H. Davies and Huw Menai, are more or less traditional in form, but those of Ursula Lavery and T. Rowland Hughes in the August number are in the expressionist manner. Short stories, stimulating articles on sociological and literary subjects, and book reviews make good reading.

The Canadian Bookman. FINDLAY I. WEAVER, 516, Yonge Street, Toronto. Bi-Monthly. 25c.

The February-March number of this year opens with an article entitled

"Churchill or Chicago," discussing the importance of a national literature for Canada; it is a common complaint that the Dominion is not nationally conscious, the attraction of America being even stronger than the counter-attraction of England. The Editor, however, is not limited in his selection of contributions by a narrowly nationalistic viewpoint—witness the acceptance of Graham McInnes's sound and brilliantly written article on "Literature in Australia." Other contents of this interesting number are the travel article on "Algiers," by James A. Roy; "Bookman Profiles," by Pelham Edgar; a biographical note on Mr. William Tyrrell, the well-known Toronto bookseller; "The Treasure Room," by Hope Jarvis (on the University of New Brunswick Library—the sixth of this series); short stories by Katherine Hale and E. H. Carson, verse by George Herbert Clarke and Goodridge Roberts, and thirty-eight pages of reviews. The article "Books for the People," by Margaret Cole, advocating the publication of cheap editions, is reprinted by permission of the author from the London *Times Literary Supplement*.

Art in New Zealand. Edited by C. A. MARRIS. *Harry Tombs*, Wellington. Quarterly. 3s. 6d.

In this tasteful production New Zealand can challenge the best of art publications at a moderate price. The quarterly is first and foremost an art magazine, but the literary contributions are by no means unimportant, and are encouraged by a series of competitions for both prose and verse. The standard set is high, and in the December-February number it is announced that no award can be made in the one-act play competition. In the March-May number is published "The Emancipation of Mr. Amble," by Una Craig, which won the prize in the annual short-story competition. Other literary contributions are verse by Robin Hyde, Paula Hanger, Patricia M. Saunders, Barbara Dent, and J. R. Hervey; "Street Scene"

(a short piece in dramatic form) by James Forsyth, and book reviews by C. A. Marris and Helen C. Wheeler.

The Aryan Path. London and Bombay. Monthly. 1s. 6d. (As. 12).

In the April number, which has reached us, an attempt is made to show the service rendered by India to the world. At this time of day it seems superfluous to dwell on the evidences of borrowings from ancient Indian civilisation in the culture of Europe. But lest we forget these things, Dr. Radhakumud Mookerji recapitulates the documentary and other proofs of contacts in very ancient times. For instance, the doctrine of reincarnation is found in Pythagoras and Empedocles, and the germ of the caste system in Plato's "Republic." It is perhaps going too far to assume that India was in every case the giver and Greece the borrower. It may be found that the home of modern civilisation was some intermediate land situated between the two, perhaps in Mesopotamia or Asia Minor, but there is no doubt that at the dawn of history the world was nearer to a universal culture than it is to-day. In a similar vein V. R. Ramachandra writes on "The Social Order in Old India" and Atulananda Chakrabarti on "A Glimpse of the Vedic Woman." Dr. Hermann Goetz contributes a provocative article entitled "The East and the West—Can they ever Meet?" the Rev. Leslie J. Belton asks, "Can Religion Save Civilization?" and Waldemar Kaempffert, Science Editor of the *New York Times*, discusses "The International Brotherhood of Scientists."

Theosophical Movement. *Theosophy Company* (India), Bombay. Monthly. Annual subscription 2s. (R. 1).

This periodical has a strictly specialist scope, its articles and reviews bearing on the occult. The March number opens with an obituary notice of William Quan Judge. An occult novel, by Mr. Judge, is reviewed at length, and "The

Great Fox-Trot," by L. Lind-af-Hageby, a satire on modern civilisation, is dealt with in another long review. The remaining articles are intended for the advice and instruction of adherents of the movement.

Studies. Edited and published by PROFESSOR V. N. BHUSHAN for the *Literary Studio*, Nowrosjee Wadia College, Poona. Annual. R.1.

The *Literary Studio*, of which this publication is the organ, has been formed with the object of instilling a real love of literature in the minds of undergraduates, inspiring them with an ideal higher than the mere ambition to pass examinations. In an introductory note the Editor states modestly that it "is doing nothing extraordinary, working no miracle of dazzling wonderment. Its work is nothing more and nothing less than what a legitimate and loyal college should and ought to do." One could wish that other professors and students shared this view, that a University has a duty to inculcate a love of culture beyond the narrow limits of the curriculum. The principal papers read during the year under the auspices of the *Studio* are included in *Studies*, a well-produced publication of nearly 150 pages. Printed on good quality paper, illustrated with woodcuts and photographic reproductions, and bound in an artistically decorated limp manilla cover, it challenges comparison with the best of English and American periodicals. There are a few misprints—not more than might be expected from printers working in a language foreign to them, but more vigilance in proof-reading would improve the already high standard of production. It is refreshing to meet with so much unaffected enthusiasm for English literature from this band of talented Indian students. While some of the papers rank as able undergraduate essays, others offer original and valuable contributions to criticism. The paper by Professor K. M. Khadye on "Benedick—the Married Man" sheds a new light

on "Much Ado about Nothing"; Professor M. M. Desai reveals wide knowledge and critical penetration in his article on "Masefield as a Poet"; Professor V. N. Bhushan writes inspiringly on "The Pilgrimage of Literary Culture"; and Professor J. J. Nanavatty on "Music and Song in the Comedies of Shakespeare." Mr. H. D. Engineer's "Religion and Philosophy in Browning's Poetry" is a thoughtful study of the poet, and Mr. A. R. Shirazi's "Bernard Shaw's Plays Pleasant" shows an understanding of Shaw's place in modern letters. There are a number of poetic contributions, amongst which "Poverty" and "On Death," by Mr. V. S. Rao, may be singled out.

New Zealand Magazine. P.O. Box 399, Wellington. Bi-Monthly. 6d.

Among articles of a topical and political character, it is cheering to observe the large amount of space devoted by the *New Zealand Magazine* to books and authors. "Peter Penn" deals with Hector Bolitho's reply to the critics of his biography of Edward VIII. There is a sketch of H. G. Wells's career (first of a series, "Who's Who in Bookland"), and several pages devoted to reviews and New Zealand books and authors.

The Garden Colony. Knox Printing and Publishing Company, Durban. Annual. 2s. 6d.

The great attraction of this Annual lies in its remarkably well-produced photographic illustrations, showing typical scenes of life and landscape in Natal, Zululand, and Pondoland. Particularly interesting illustrations in the last number are the unique snapshots of Zulu ceremonial and incidents of daily life—"Zulu courtship," "Zulu tribesmen skinning an ox before preparing the meat for a wedding feast," "A Zulu chief being waited on by his head wife," etc. The letterpress consists mainly of articles

dealing with economic subjects, the agricultural and industrial development of the Colony.

The Indian Review. Edited by G. A. NATESAN. Natesan, Madras. Monthly. 1s. or As. 8.

We have received the March number of this important monthly. Its sixty pages are filled with interesting matter, proving what a wide range of cultural topics is engaging the attention of the educated Indian today. The contributors are by no means provincial in their outlook. First place may be given to matters of vital interest for India—"Indian Currency Problems," "How the Indian Map became Red," "Provincial Governments and Party," "Socialism and the Indian Ideal," "Gandhi Sutras," the discussion of Congress problems and economic competition—in "Japan and Indian Textiles"—but there are also articles of world interest, as "League of American Peoples," "The Perspective in Europe," and "Foreign Affairs." There are legal and educational articles, a women's page (with articles on Mrs. Neville Chamberlain, "Women in Politics" and "Sex Education for Girls"), literary notes and book reviews.

Indian World. Edited by S. G. WARTY, M.A. Lakshmi Building, Bombay. Monthly. R.3.

This is a recent addition to the list of Indian periodicals. It is handsomely produced on art paper, and illustrated with portraits of contributors. The January number contains, besides articles on economic and scientific subjects, several of broad cultural interest—"History Writing in Ancient India," "Reformation of Hindu Religion," a reprint from *Time and Tide* of Bernard Shaw's article "The Problem of the Jews," "The Age of Chivalry," by "Miss Modern," a short story ("A Tale from Ancient Ceylon"), several pages of book reviews, and an interesting feature en-

titled "Great Thoughts," a collection of aphorisms by famous men and women.

Federated India. Edited by V. VENKATESWARA SASTRULU. Tondiarpet, Madras. Monthly. 8 annas.

Federated India was founded in 1927 as a political weekly for the discussion of constitutional issues bearing on the Government of India, while dealing with other important current topics. Its scope has been enlarged to include literary subjects, and reviews of the latest books are regularly published. The contents of the March number, which we have received, comprise, besides other interesting articles, one by N. K. Venkatesam entitled "Are Indian States Ulsters?" "The Stronghold of Colour Bar," "A Study of the Races and Problems of South Africa," by P. S. Joshi, Johannesburg; "Communist Influence in China," by Dr. M. A. Salmin; and Dr. Goebbels's account of the Nazi Revolution, illustrating the Indian's awareness of world history, and there are several articles on local affairs. Considerable space is accorded to book reviews.

Varthaga Oolian. Trichinopoly. Monthly. Yearly subscription, R.1.

This enterprising little monthly has an English as well as a vernacular section. The articles are political, or deal with economic questions, mainly such as are of special interest for Southern and Central India. Books received for review and listed include periodicals of a literary type as well as more specialist commercial and political publications.

BOOKS RECEIVED

too late for detailed review.

Marie Antoinette. A play by UPTON SINCLAIR. T. Werner Laurie. 7s. 6d.

We warmly recommend this fine play.

Adagio in Blue. By T. INGLIS MOORE. Angus and Robertson. 6s.

A volume of poetry of rare distinction.

Competitions

RESULTS OF THE 1938 LITERARY COMPETITIONS

GOOD work was sent in from nearly every part of the Empire, but the standard of merit was unequal, and in some of the sections none of the entries was judged to be worthy of a prize. The following awards have been made.

PRIZES

Short Poem.—Prize: Ierne Ormsby, North Sheffield. Hon. Mention: Pauline Huthwaite, Hawksworth, Notts; A. V. Stuart, Edinburgh.

Article.—No prize awarded. Hon. Mention: Marjorie Pearman, Winnipeg, Canada.

Review.—Prize: J. H. Harvey, Auckland, New Zealand. Hon. Mention: William Saunders, Edinburgh; E. L. Kemp, Walton-on-Thames, Surrey.

MEDALS

Unpublished Volume of Verse.—Medal: Ierne Ormsby, North Sheffield. Hon. Mention: A. V. Stuart, Edinburgh.

Unpublished First Novel.—No medal awarded. Hon. Mention: John Guinan, Moylena Raheny, Co. Dublin.

One-Act Play.—No medal awarded. Hon. Mention: William Saunders, Edinburgh.

Short Story.—Medal: H. Drake-Brockman, Cottesloe, West Australia. Hon. Mention: C. R. Allen, Dunedin, New Zealand.

The following remarks on the work submitted have been made by the adjudicators:

In some cases competitors missed awards through a misunderstanding of what was required. For instance, in the Translation Section Miss A. V. Stuart sent in a skilful rendering of "Mademoiselle de Maupin" into English verse; but when a translation from any prose work in a foreign language into English is asked for it goes without saying that a prose version is desired. It should be mentioned here that the object of this competition, as of all the other competitions organised by the ANNUAL, is to assist the writer in finding a market for his work. There is a definite

market for good prose translations, but for verse translations the market may be said to be non-existent.

A detailed report has been sent to each competitor on the return of the entries. Some general remarks may be made, for the guidance of future entrants.

First Novel.—Young writers are too apt to be introspective, to take a narrow and jaundiced view of life, influenced by their own experiences, and have a predilection for the tragic or depressing. An objective and, if possible, an optimistic view of the world is a first essential to success, particularly in a first novel.

Plays.—This is a most difficult form of writing, and competitors in most instances attempted themes that were beyond their powers. Some of the plays sent in (as those by Robert K. Spedding) showed skill in dialogue and drawing of character, others had a soundly constructed plot, but in no one entry were all these necessary qualities combined. Miss A. V. Stuart again sent in an accomplished effort in verse, which was, however, quite unsuitable for acting.

Articles.—Some of the entries in this section were well-written essays of too general an interest. To qualify for publication in the ANNUAL an article must give some new and interesting information about contemporary literature. That on "Watson Kirkconnell of Winnipeg" by Marjorie Pearman has been accepted for publication for the information it gives about a little-known branch of literary activity, but the ideal article would combine critical acumen with information. The author's views on life, essays on the classics and things that have been said before about present-day writers are not wanted.

These remarks apply also to reviews, which should give an idea of the contents of the books reviewed and a brief criticism of their literary qualities. Only reviews of books or periodicals such as are usually noticed in the ANNUAL will be considered.

In the short poem section, entries should be suitable for publication in the ANNUAL, especially with regard to length. Poems which are too long are not eligible for the prize.

LITERARY COMPETITIONS, 1939

The following prizes are offered for competition:

1. A prize of one guinea for the best short poem, not more than 30 lines in length, suitable for publication in "The British Annual of Literature."
2. A prize of five guineas for the best article (from 1,500 to 5,000 words), suitable for publication in "The British Annual of Literature."

3. A prize of one guinea for the best review (from 250 to 500 words) of a book or periodical published in 1940.

The winning entries in the above competitions shall be published in "The British Annual of Literature" for 1940. The Editor shall be entitled to purchase for publication any of the entries not awarded the prize, at the usual rates of payment.

Bronze medals are offered for competition, as under :

1. A medal for the best unpublished volume of verse.
2. A medal for the best unpublished work of biography, history, travel or criticism.
3. A medal for the best unpublished first novel.
4. A medal for the best unpublished one-act play that has not yet been publicly performed.
5. A medal for the best unpublished three- or four-act play that has not yet been publicly performed.
6. A medal for the best published or unpublished short story, dealing with life in any part of the Empire (limit of length 5,000 words).
7. A medal for the best piece of translation (minimum length 2,000 words) from any prose work in French or German into English prose.

JUNIOR SECTION

The following prizes are offered for competition to entrants of 18 years of age or under :

1. A prize of one guinea for the best short poem (limit of length 30 lines).
2. A prize of one guinea for the best short story (limit of length 3,000 words).
3. A prize of one guinea for the best version of a story taken from the Bible, told in the entrant's own words (limit of length 1,500 words).

Prizes of books will be awarded to entries placed second in order of merit in each Section, provided a sufficiently high standard is reached.

In addition to the above prizes, a bronze medal will be awarded to the school from which the strongest collection of work is sent in, provided the standard reached is sufficiently high. The number as well as the merit of the entries will be taken into consideration in cases where a good average is maintained.

CONDITIONS

Entries to all the above competitions, for prizes or medals, are to be sent in anonymously. Everyone desiring to compete in the Senior Section must detach the Competitions Coupon from the ANNUAL and post it, duly

filled in, in an envelope addressed to The Competitions Editor, "British Annual of Literature," 7, Ludgate Broadway, London, E.C. 4. In return he will receive an entry form bearing a number, which number must be clearly marked on all entries. The entry form must be sent in under separate cover from MSS., both entries and entry form being addressed to The Competitions Editor, "British Annual of Literature," 7, Ludgate Broadway, London, E.C. 4.*

In the Junior Section the rules are the same as in the Senior Section, excepting that one collective form (with four entries) may be used by a school entering work by various competitors. The names of individual competitors should be written after the title of the entry on the entry form.

Any competitor in any one of the above competitions has the right to suggest the name of any well-known writer as adjudicator of the competition in which he enters, and an effort will be made, whenever possible, to secure the assistance of adjudicators thus nominated. Adjudicators appointed on the nomination of a competitor will be required to state that they are personally unacquainted with any of the competitors entering in the competition they are to adjudicate, or any of the MSS. submitted for the competition. The chief adjudicator shall in every case be the Editor of the ANNUAL, whose decision shall be final.

The last date for receiving entries shall be June 1st, 1940.

No responsibility can be undertaken for MSS. submitted, but an endeavour will be made to return these if a stamped, addressed envelope is enclosed.

READERS' COMPETITION

We were disappointed by the lack of response to this competition. Readers were evidently discouraged by the task set them of guessing the works from which forty quotations were chosen, but the difficulties in the way of winning a prize were by no means insuperable. The quotations given were all taken from books reviewed, announced or otherwise mentioned in the ANNUAL. Some of them, as "How long must I drag this chain of life?" (from Barrie's "Boy David") and "Now he belongs to the ages" (last line of "Abraham Lincoln") must be familiar to all readers. Those from the works of Grey Owl were also easily recognisable, as well as the two lines taken from one of Dr. Douglas Hyde's translations. Even if it were an impossible ideal to guess all, a prize of £25 was offered to the competitor who should be the first to place the largest number of quotations, and it is surprising that no one tried his luck. We are forced to the melancholy conclusion that no one in this feverish age will read good literature, even when he is offered money to do so. The time taken up

* War-time address : London Printing Works, Guildford, Surrey.

would for many people have been much less than that now wasted in fruitless efforts to solve cross-word puzzles, many of the books in question being short volumes of poetry or plays that could have been read through in a few hours.

We have, however, not abandoned our ambition of trying to further the reading of good books, in realising which we invite the co-operation of our readers. We offer a prize of £25 to the reader who shall send us the best suggestion for a competition to encourage the reading of books reviewed or announced in the *ANNUAL*, under the following conditions.

CONDITIONS

1. The suggestion must be practicable, in the opinion of the Editor of the *ANNUAL*.

2. In the event of two suggestions of equal value being received, the prize shall go to the one first received. If the two suggestions are received by the same post the prize shall be divided. The different dates of publication of the *ANNUAL* in the various Dominions shall be taken into consideration in deciding the question of priority.

3. The last date for receiving entries shall be June 1st, 1940.

4. Every suggestion must be posted separately by registered post to The Competitions Editor, "British Annual of Literature," 7, Ludgate Broadway, London, E.C. 4,* the envelope being clearly marked "Readers' Competition," and accompanied by the Competitions Coupon detached from the 1939 *ANNUAL*, duly filled in, and a money-order for one shilling (sterling). Stamps will not be accepted.

5. The Readers' Competition is not open to any member of the staff of the British Authors' Press or of "The British Annual of Literature."

JUNIOR READERS' COMPETITION

We offer a prize of two guineas to the reader of or under eighteen years of age who shall procure the largest number of orders for the current number of the *ANNUAL*, provided at least eight orders are obtained. Names and addresses of purchasers will be received in one or more lists until June 1st, 1940, accompanied in each case by the name and address of the reader competitor and the name and address of a schoolmaster or clergyman as a reference for evidence of age. Prizes of 5s. each will be sent to every entrant in this competition who obtains orders for four or more copies of the *ANNUAL*.

All communications in connection with this competition should be addressed to: The Competitions Editor, "British Annual of Literature," 7, Ludgate Broadway, London, E.C. 4,* the envelope being marked "Junior Readers' Competition."

* War-time address: London Printing Works, Guildford, Surrey.